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# PEACE ISLAND SERIES





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AT DOLLY'S KETTLEDRUM.



*Peace Island series*

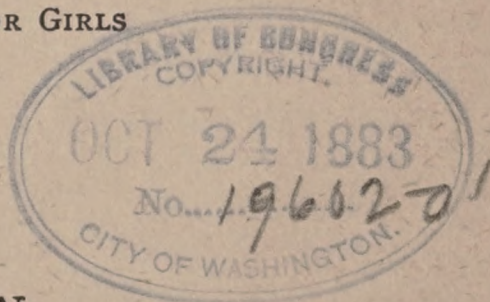
# DOLLY'S KETTLEDRUM



✓  
BY NORA PERRY.

WITH

OTHER STORIES FOR GIRLS



BOSTON  
D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY  
32 FRANKLIN STREET

1883



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**D. LOTHROP & COMPANY.**



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## DOLLY'S CHRISTMAS KETTLEDRUM.

AT the end of the great hall in Mrs. Portman's house there was one large window with a deep window-seat, which was a favorite gathering-place for all the girls on that floor. Mrs. Portman, ten years before this story opens, had been a great leader of society — not fashionable society merely — and losing the fortune that had enabled her to take such a position, by one of the disastrous financial crises that ruined so many people, she had at once gone to work and established a private day and boarding school for young ladies, in her out-of-town mansion. So popular had this school become that some one who had vainly waited and tried to find a vacancy one autumn made this rather spiteful remark concerning it: "One would think it was the Kingdom of



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Heaven, there is such difficulty in getting in." A dear little impulsive girl, one of the pupils and one of the heroines of my story that I'm about to tell, retorted upon this:

"And it *is* the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth," which I think presents Mrs. Portman's school in as favorable a light before my readers as many words of mine could do. So now I will return to that window in the great hall. It is the day before Christmas. Those of the pupils who have not gone home on account of the distance, or other reasons, are fluttering about here and there in high holiday humor and expectation. A group of these have wedged themselves into the big window-seat where they sit chattering like magpies. The centre of the group and the centre of attraction is a bright-eyed brunette. She has the sweetest face, the most lovable face in the world. She is the dear little girl who gave that happy retort about the Kingdom of Heaven. She is saying now as she sits there in the window-seat:

"I'll tell you what you must do; as my box has come to-day and yours hasn't, you must come to my



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room this evening and share my fun and goodies.” There are no disclaimers, no laggards with excuses to beg out of this charming prospect. The whole four girls who have received this invitation of dear Dolly Lincoln’s are only too happy to accept it. As they sit there in the afternoon sun, which is going down in full splendor, they look like five rosebuds. Dolly Lincoln with her red and brown brightness, is a rich Jacqueminot; Margie Gaines, with her golden hair and white skin, a Perle des Jardins; Milly Jarvis, with her dark bright hair and dusky skin, a bronzed Jean Ducher; Katy Downes, a little fragrant tea rose bud all pale amber perfection, and Florry Wainright a lovely Noisette of pink and white.

Suddenly all their gay chatter and light laughter goes out in a queer little silence, as down the half they see approaching a tall overgrown girl whose near-sighted eyes seem to be searching for some one. She comes nearer, quite close to them, indeed, before she appears to recognize them, then she stops abruptly, a deep red color flushes into her face, and she says quickly:

“I am trying to find Miss Weston. Mrs. Portman



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said she was at the end of this hall somewhere."

There was a moment of awkward silence, and then Dolly Lincoln spoke up hurriedly:

"She must be in number twenty-four, I think."

As the girl disappeared in number twenty-four, Dolly Lincoln burst out in subdued tones:

"I think we are horrid little prigs!" A moment more, and then vehemently, "I'm going to invite her to my party to-night!"

"Dolly!" cried the whole four of her companions in a horrified chorus.

"I am — I am, so there!"

"A girl that could do such a thing as she did!"

"Well, we don't *know* anything; it's after all 'circumstantial evidence,' as the newspapers say."

"Well, I should think it was a pretty clear case. Julia Morris goes away and leaves her bag, or reticule, or something, with her, and inside of that bag is the algebra problem for exhibition. When she comes back the problem is missing out of the bag, and Miss Fanny Drayton who is the only rival in algebra that Julia had, of course comes in first and gets the credit — she would probably have come in



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second but for that, as she usually did, for poor Julia coming back at the last moment has to make out a new one, which in her hurry can't help being higgledy piggledy and full of little errors. Circumstantial evidence!" winds up Florry Wainright with a final burst of scorn.

Dolly Lincoln does not reply to this; perhaps she is wisely silent, or perhaps she is overruled and regrets her declaration of a few moments ago. The four girls think the latter; and the time goes on, the minutes slip by, the tea hour comes, and the four girls, Milly and Mary and Florry and Katy, have put on their prettiest frills and ribbons and gone in a little giggling body to Dolly Lincoln's door. Dolly meets them with all her merry archness of cordiality. She is a little dramatist, is Dolly, and is fond of putting everything into that light; so she bends and bows and welcomes them with a gay travesty of reality. She calls Florry Wainright her dear duchess, and hopes she left the duke well; and Milly and Mary are the Princesses of Portmanshire, and little Katy Downes is the Countess of Kisses. It is not long before the whole company are clustered



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together over the contents of the Christmas box. The box was so big that Dolly has separated the sweets, the candies and cookies and fruits from the rest and put them into a pretty basket which is passed about from guest to guest.

“*What* a pretty basket!” exclaimed Florry Wainright enthusiastically; and she lifts it up from the table for inspection.

“Yes ; isn’t it? It was Julia Norris’s. She gave it to me when she went away.”

From the basket they fell to discussing the contents. Such a tempting array of dainties. Bon bons fresh from Paris—new devices the like of which none of the girls had ever seen before. The most enchanting of these were sugar robin’s eggs. Inside of each was a little gold ring. There were six of them.

“Just enough to go round and one left over, Dolly!” cried Milly ecstatically, as she cracked the thin sugar shell of the one bestowed upon herself.

Dolly did not reply, but looked a little troubled, Milly thought. Perhaps after all Dolly was regretting her generosity in giving them all such treasures.



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She managed somehow to convey this to Dolly. Dolly flung herself back upon the bed where she was sitting, in a little burst of laughter.

“What a goose you are, Milly. These bon bons are made to give away. Mamma chose them on purpose for me to give to my friends. They are Christmas favors.”

“Tell you what we can do,” here cried out little Katy Downes, waking up out of one of her dazy little dreams. “Tell you what you can do,” and Katy struck her tiny hand upon her knee in the delight at her new idea; “you — we — can make a club and call it the Robin’s Ring Club!”

Dolly jumped off the bed and clutched Katy in a wild embrace.

“Oh, you dear! it’s just the thing. Hurrah for the Robin’s Ring Club! Hurrah for the Countess of Kisses!” and Dolly showered the latter upon Katy until she screamed for mercy.

Just here in the midst of all this commotion there came a rap upon the door, and Dolly flew back to her throne upon the bed, and then called out rather excitedly: “Come in!”



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The door opened and there appeared upon the threshold — Fanny Drayton. At the moment every one of the girl guests stared in amazement. How dared she intrude herself, they thought. The next moment their amazement took a different form, for Dolly from her seat upon the bed waved her hands invitingly, and said: "Better late than never, Fanny. Come in and sit down. I was afraid that Jane hadn't given you my note, you were so long coming."

The four pairs of eyes that had been staring at the girl in the doorway, now turned away from her and became intent upon something else. Milly Jarvis leaned against Margie Gaines, and Margie Gaines became absorbed in tasting a piece of candied cocoanut, and Florry Wainright bent her head over the basket, while Katy Downes clasped her hands over a cookie in her lap, and looked as if she were going to sleep.

A second or two Fanny paused on the threshold, then as Dolly kept urging her to come in, she slowly approached the bed and as slowly sank into the vacant chair near by. Dolly's eyes flashed as she saw how all the girls ignored this unfortunate latest



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comer, and her brave, generous, pitiful spirit rose up to meet the situation. With her gayest, brightest manner she introduced Fanny to the others as the Empress Eugenia, and sparkled off into so many funny jokes that despite their determination to be dignified and cool, first one girl and then another giggled over their candies and cake.

But not one of them turned a glance upon Fanny, or vouchsafed a word to her. They fell to talking again with each other, but they paid not the slightest attention to the unfortunate Empress Eugenia. Dolly tried to make up for all this by quiet little courtesies and kindnesses. She passed her the basket of sweets again and again, and when Fanny helped herself timidly and sparingly, she heaped a plate for her with the cream of the dainties.

But it was of no use, the near-sighted eyes filled and filled with tears, and the tears ran over and fell upon the sweet things, till the sweet things turned salt and bitter, and the poor empress at last choked and then burst into a sob, and then jumping up flew from the room.

Milly Jarvis stopped leaning against Margie Gaines



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and sat bolt upright, and Margie Gaines dropped her piece of candied cocoanut as if it had been a hot coal, and Florry Wainwright dropped the basket and tipped over the table, plates, goodies and all, and Katy Downes lifted her hands all smeared with her crushed cookie and covered her face, while Dolly Lincoln began to cry as if her heart would break. Between her sobs she gasped :

“And it's Christmas, and she's alone—oh, oh, and no mother—and no father—to send her—thi-things, and we're—mean—sel-selfish, ha-hateful—gir-girls, and wha-what'll be-become of *us* sometime—spos'n—spos'n we—shou-should do—something bad—that we—were sorry for—for if she has done what—you think—she *is* sorry, and you're not giving her a chance !” At this last word a general sob and wail sounded in the room; there was a confused tangle of gold locks and dark locks upon the bed, a confused cry of “Dolly, don't !” and “Dolly, I shouldn't have thought,” which was interrupted by a voice from the floor. It was the voice of Florry Wainwright. “Girls, girls, look here !” She was sitting near the overturned table amid broken plates



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and scattered dainties. The empty basket was in her lap. She had just taken a paper from the bottom of it which she was regarding intently. There was something in her voice which made every girl listen—something in her face which the next moment made every girl jump down off the bed and cluster round her on the floor. As they did so, Florry pushed the paper towards them, and said: “Girls, this is Julia Norris’s missing problem; it was at the bottom of this basket. What does it mean?”

Dolly jumped to her feet, stood for a moment with her lips parted, her eyes dilated with some new thought, then she rushed from the room and tore down the hall. The next instant Miss Weston, one of the teachers, was astonished to see Dolly Lincoln with tear-stained cheeks and swollen eyes, standing before her, to hear her ask:

“Miss Weston, was it a bag or a basket that Julia Norris left in charge of Fanny Drayton when she went to see her mother in New York?”

“It was a basket—that pretty Fayal basket. Why do you ask?”

Then Dolly told her story. Miss Weston was



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only a girl herself of eighteen, and she got quite as excited as Dolly as she listened to this story, and she took Dolly's hand and ran with her down the great hall to where the little group of girls sat on the floor puzzling and pondering over the problem.

"Yes, of course it's the missing problem!" she exclaimed; "and you found it at the bottom of the basket. I asked Julia again and again if she had searched her basket thoroughly when she got it back, and she was so positive, as she always is. I ought to have looked myself. I ought to have remembered that Julia is the most impatient girl and constantly mixing up and overlooking her things! but she was *so* sure. Oh, dear! where's Fanny?"

"I'll fetch her," and Dolly tore down the hall again on her happy errand. How can I ever picture the scene that ensued? How can I ever make you see Fanny, with her winking, blinking, near-sighted eyes looking and listening and gradually taking it all in—that the problem had been found where she had put it—that everybody was happy and sorry in a breath, and asking her pardon and trying to kiss her and make much of her. The crown of everything came.



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when suddenly Dolly pounced upon the sixth robin's egg, the one "left over," and made Fanny the sixth member of the Robin's Ring club. And such a good time as they had afterwards. They sat up until half-past nine o'clock, and Miss Weston sat with them, and laughed and told stories as gayly as any of them, and at the end when one after another of the girls said they never, never had had such a good time in their lives before, Miss Weston declared that she certainly never had a *better* time ; whereupon, Dolly pulled off her Robin's Egg ring and asked Miss Weston if she felt too big and too old to belong to their club ; and Miss Weston said she should be only too delighted to belong, but she didn't want to rob Dolly of her ring ; but Dolly wasn't going to stop for such a trifle as that, she was sure she could get another one. So, "on her very littlest finger," Miss Weston put Dolly's Robin's Egg ring ; and there she wears it to this day, as sign and seal of her membership of the Robin's Ring Club, and of that delightful evening when they were all so sorry and happy together, at Dolly's Christmas Kettledrum.



## NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

GLEN, I want to ask you a question — a straight-out question, as we used to say at Miss Teller's school when our curiosity was roused."

Glen laughed : "You may ask a dozen, Kitty."

"And you will answer them or not as you think fit?"

"*You* would never ask a question I should not want to answer, Kittykins."

"Oh dear, now you do put me on the very top shelf of my honor and delicacy, and all that sort of thing, but I'm going to ask the question all the same, though it's downright curiosity that prompts it, nothing else. The question is just this : Why do you have that old French motto, *Noblesse Oblige*, appear in so many places in your house? I picked it out the other day in that pretty banner screen design you had painted, and I saw it painted in that scroll that hangs at the foot of your bed, and here it is now in



this dreadful old English text on this lovely mirror frame, and engraved inside that locket you wear."

Glen — her name is Glendower, an old family name which her father bestowed upon her for the very good reason that he was bound to have a child of his wear the time-honored appellation, and as he had no son to wear it, he could not see why it was not the prettiest name in the world for a girl, and for that matter neither can I — Glen, as her friend Kitty came to the conclusion of her question, looked up from her crewel work and laughed again.

"O, Kitty," she cried, "you are such a queer little conundrum of a girl! I thought when you began, you were going to ask about some very serious matter indeed; and lo and behold it's only about our old motto. See here!" and going to the book-case she took down a volume, turned the leaves, and presently handed it open to Kitty.

And Kitty read of a certain gallant French officer in the time of Henry the Fourth, of France, who when honors and glories were showered upon him after a hard-fought battle where he had borne himself most gallantly, modestly disclaimed the sole honor



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and credit, and pointed out a brother officer as more deserving than himself. Those were rough and roys-tering times when men did not give way to another easily, and he was questioned with much amazement for reason of his conduct.

He promptly replied: "I come of an honorable race who have never profited by unlawful gains."

When this answer was noised about, one of the peers of the realm was so struck with admiration that he exclaimed: "He should be knighted for his nobility of conduct, and his motto should be *Noblesse Oblige*."

When a peer of the realm in those days spoke like this, speech was soon followed by action, and it was not long before the gallant officer bore the title of baron, and upon his shield, he had written the motto, *Noblesse Oblige*.

When Kitty lifted her eyes from the page, Glen spoke up, answering the unspoken question of her eyes: "That officer was an ancestor of ours, my dear, and when I first read this story about him, four years ago, though I was only thirteen years old, I was determined to keep that motto of his in sight to save me from doing mean things."



"As if you *could* do mean things, Glen !"

"As if I *couldn't* ! Oh, you don't know me, Kittykins ; I've got some horrid faults."

"As which?" asked Kitty, smiling up incredulously into beautiful Glen's face, beautiful Glen whom she had never seen ruffled or moved out of that sweet serenity of hers.

"Ah, but I am not going to tell ; you must find out for yourself," blushing and laughing, Glen answered ; and Kitty laughed too.

She didn't believe much in Glen's faults, her "horrid faults," as that young lady had called them, and Glen herself was certainly not very much impressed by them as she talked about them there that bright day in her own cosey little sitting-room.

Going home after lunch, Kitty, as she always did when she had spent any time with Glen, pondered admiringly and lovingly over her many attractions and virtues ; and on this occasion turned over again in her mind the question of the faults.

"Of course," said sensible little Kitty to herself, "Glen has faults, because everybody has faults ; but I'm sure there is nothing mean or horrid about them.



She must be like that person that Goldsmith tells about, whose 'failings leaned to virtue's side.' "

While Kitty thus lovingly defends her idol in her thoughts, the idol herself, remembering Kitty's admiring looks and words and what had called them forth, is thinking of the same subject—these very faults. "I know what my faults are," she said half-aloud as she thought. "I know I am fond of admiration, and pretty clothes, and of having my own way. I know I am inclined to be indolent, and to put off everything I can that is not an absolute pleasure. But of one thing I am sure: I am not selfish nor stingy."

She said this last sentence with very decided emphasis. Perhaps it was her occupation that pointed the emphasis—she was folding up several partly worn dresses of her own, and was presently going to make them into a package to send away to her cousin, Josephine Emory, who was not favored like herself with a rich father. Every spring and autumn Glen made up these packages to send to Josephine, and whenever she did it her heart always glowed with a warm sense of kindness, not only towards Josephine, but towards people generally.











“Joe will get this to-morrow afternoon if I express it to-day,” she thought, “and how pleased she will be, and how pretty she will look when she has made the things over with those deft little fingers of hers.”

What would Kitty Bell have thought, what would she have said, and what would Glen have thought and said, if they had been invisibly present at the Emorys the next afternoon at five o'clock? At that very hour precisely, Josephine was looking over the package of dresses. She held up to the light a long polonaise of gray cashmere, with a very elaborate trimming of satin of the same shade. The skirt for this was quite as elaborately trimmed, and heavy with stiff facings and quillings. Josephine's face did not look as pleased as Glen had fancied it. “Mother,” she said at length, “do you know I think it would be cheaper for me to buy my own dresses than to get these made over to fit me. Glen, you see, is a great deal larger than I.”

“But then you could never afford to get such material, my dear.”

“I know that, but this material is partly worn, and I must get new satin, if I can match it, to make fresh



bows, and I must pay Mrs. Wheeler quite as much as I would to make a new dress to make it over thoroughly, or else I must wear the skirt as it is with all that heavy lining and facing, and I can't—I'm not strong like Glen; I can't carry all that weight."

"Of course not; but how about the others, Josephine?" asked her mother. Then Josephine held up and inspected two more elaborately trimmed gowns—one of mingled surah satin and foulard of peacock blue and fawn color, another in two shades of green. All of them were profusely trimmed, and heavy with the weight of crinoline, and other linings and facings. Both too long in the skirt and large in the waist and sleeves for delicate little Josephine, there would be a great deal of ripping and fitting and sewing before they would be wearable for her; and all this would cost money.

"I suppose Glen thinks we do the altering ourselves," presently said Mrs. Emory.

"Yes, I suppose she does; she has seen me do little things that were needed to my dresses when I have been visiting her. But how little people stop to think of other people's ways and means—I mean



how little rich people do. Glen knows that I teach all day, and that you work all day about the house," — as Josephine said this, she looked up at her mother, that dear, dear tired mother, who would never say she was tired ; and looking into the dear face, a spasm of emotion which came up from her girl's heart, out of all the bitter sweet memories of their hard pinching times, quivered upon her lips. Then all at once a rush of tears came, and then a rush of words in such truth as people give utterance to when the hurt heart speaks :

"O, mother, mother, I know Glen means well — that she means to give me pleasure, and it gives *her* pleasure too ; but do you think that if *I* were in her place I should be so ignorant of those I wanted to help ? If I were Glen I should see that my gifts made it easier for those who received them, not harder."

"My dear, I'm sure it's very kind of her to *think* to send you these things."

"Mother, I suppose all this sounds very ungrateful, but why should we be grateful for what we don't ask for and don't want, just because some one chooses to burden us out of their superabundance ?



Glen doesn't want these things. She is very glad to give them to me; and she says to her mother—I have heard her—‘Mamma, I shall give Joe my foulard and the gray cashmere—they have both strained at the seams—and I shall get me a white pongee and a new black silk to take their place.’ Mother, you know and I know what we should do if I were in Glen’s place, with eight hundred dollars a year, to spend as she pleases. If I were in Glen’s place and Glen in mine, I should not send her cast-off finery; I should give her now and then a new gown, or the money to buy one, just such as she wanted.”

“Your uncle William is very kind on Christmas, you must remember, Joe dear.”

“Yes, mother, but I’m talking of Glen; and the sting of it is that Glen is so pleased with herself for her goodness to ‘poor Joe,’ mother.”

“My dear, we have learned many things by being poor that we should never have known if we had been rich, and perhaps if we had not learned so much of the wants and ways of poor people, if we had been rich always, we might have been no wiser in our actions than your cousin Glen.”



## NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

“Perhaps so,” answered Josephine, sighing; but even as she made this admission she thought to herself it was scarcely possible, so vivid was her realization of the wants and ways of those about her.

Kitty Bell was in a great state of delight, for she had got her heart's desire in having her beautiful Glen for a guest at Bellefontaine, the summer residence of the Bell family. Glen was a charming guest; sweet tempered, and easily pleased, as all sweet tempered people are generally, she fitted in to all the little plans and pursuits with a ready alacrity that made her delightful. As she had said of herself, she was fond of having her own way; but in a bright lively house like the Bells, it was not difficult to make her ways like theirs. There were also plenty of lively neighbors, and picnics, lawn tennis parties, boating parties, and all the many summer excursions occupied the days from morning until night. Glen had noticed, however, that on Saturday of every week Kitty always excused herself from any of the pleasure plans, and spent the time in her mother's sewing-room. In the beginning of the visit she had



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said to Glen, "Saturdays I always spend with mamma in sewing, and you can join me in the sewing room or not, just as you choose." But Glen did not like to sew, so she never accepted this invitation more fully than to put her head in at the doorway now and then, or look in at the low window to say a word to Kitty. "Dear, good little thing!" she used to think of Kitty rather patronizingly, "she will never do any great thing, never take a high place, or see beyond her daily routine of the usual cut-and-dried duties and charities, but I like her immensely, and there must be somebody to do the small things of life." While she said all this to herself, beautiful Glen was thinking of a certain voluntary performance of hers once a fortnight when she was in town, at the rooms of the Christian Association for poor boys. Glen had a lovely voice, and when the young president of the association asked her if she would sing one evening for his boys, Glen consented with no idea of repeating it; but she found it so pleasant, with not only the appreciation of the boys, but with the praise of the president and two or three of his friends who were present, that she volunteered to sing



again ; and so the singing had kept on from fortnight to fortnight, until it had got to be a regular thing, and Glen found as the winter went on that her audience also increased, and that she was quite a heroine—a heroine who was greatly commended for her services to these poor children. Thinking of all this, and of Kitty and her small things, Glen one Saturday morning sauntered into the sewing-room, and found her friend busily at work upon a little gown, and with a pile of other little gowns before her.

“Charity work, eh, Kitty dear! My child, why don’t you let somebody else do it who would be glad of the employment? I always do that way, and so do a double charity service, you see.”

“But it isn’t charity work, Glen. I’ll tell you. Mamma has a friend who has had great reverses. We should be very glad to give her money, but she very naturally wouldn’t like that, and so mamma and I hit upon this way to help her. She has several children and I persuaded her to let me employ some of my leisure time in making garments for them. Mamma told her that she should be very glad to have me learn how to cut and fit



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and make clothing for my own sake, which is quite true, and I am very, very glad to help dear auntie May, as I have always called her."

"But what is this — what are you doing with this pretty black silk of yours?" queried Glen.

"Oh! that I am fitting over a little and re-trimming for Jessie, the eldest daughter, who is near my age, but slighter and smaller."

"But why don't you send it as it is, and let her do it herself?"

"Because Jessie is nursery governess to the younger children, and besides, assists her mother in the chamber work, so she hasn't any time, unless she takes the time that she ought to rest to do it; and if she hired it done, it would hardly be the real help I want it to be, would it?"

Glen could not answer. Her heart gave a great throb and a mist seemed to obscure her vision for a moment, for all at once Kitty's ways that she had thought such small ways, shone before her in contrast to her own. All at once she saw how she had deceived herself in her idea of her own superiority. While she had been priding herself upon



## NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

her good works, her generosity, none of which brought her trouble or pains, but only gratified her ambition and contributed to her pleasure, here was this little Kitty who loved the sunshine and the flowers, whom they had always called at school, "lazy little Kitty," voluntarily giving up her time, voluntarily giving up the sunshine and the flowers, and the gay doings, whatever they might be, that came on Saturday, that she might do this unselfish and noble thing; while she, Glendower Hastings, who had set before herself that old motto of *Noblesse Oblige*, to keep from doing the mean or the selfish act, she — as Glen reached this climax in all the sudden rush of thought, her impetuous nature burst forth in a flood of tears.

"O Glen, Glen!" and Kitty sprang from her seat: "what is it?"

Glen answered by removing the chain that held the locket whereon she had had engraved her motto.

"Kitty, I don't deserve to wear it," she said.

"Glen, Glen, what *do* you mean?"

"I mean that I have been miserably selfish, while I was priding myself upon my superiority —



that I have been setting myself up, while you, oh you dear, blessed Kitty — *you* have showed me the right, unselfish thing I *should* have done ! ”

Glen was nobler than she gave herself credit for at the time, for then and there moved out of her self-absorption, with flushing cheeks, she did sore penance by frankly confessing herself to Kitty — by telling her of all her selfish thoughtlessness, by saying at the end — “ And Josephine is my own cousin, Kitty, whom I thought I was doing so much for in sending her my old dresses that I didn’t want, for her to take the time and the money that she couldn’t spare, to fit them over herself.”

Kitty distressed and sympathetic, and deprecating her own simplicity of action as anything noble, tried in vain to console her friend by praise of her present frankness, and delicate excuses for her former thoughtlessness. There was no half-way to Glen. Once the truth was placed before her she never attempted to shirk it, and it showed what a really fine basis there was to her character, that fond as she was of praise and adulation, that she did not now fall back upon Kitty’s praises



## NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

and excuses. She listened to them, however, but with a new look in her eyes—an admiring look of appreciation—for Kitty, whose ways she had ignorantly called “small ways;” and presently with this new look in her eyes, and with her usual quiet composure, she bent over and clasped the chain and locket she had worn about Kitty’s neck.

“It is you who should wear this and not I, Kitty dear,” she said gently. Kitty tried to protest, but Glen made it a matter of personal favor.

“I want you to wear the motto to please me, Kitty; not as I have worn it for a reminder, but as our knight of the old days wore it, as a seal and sign of his own nobility.”

Kitty could not understand, she never did understand why Glen should make so much of so small a matter. Like all simple, unimaginative persons, she could not rate herself, and simply thought she had done a very natural and commonplace thing, and that Glen who was so clever, and had so much to do that was splendid and brilliant for people, had only forgotten to do the commonplace thing for awhile. Perhaps if this



## NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

dear, modest, good little girl could have stepped into the Emorys' small sitting-room some time after this, and heard Josephine exclaim at the check she found in a letter from her cousin Glen, and have heard her read aloud to her mother the letter itself, and have heard Josephine's tearful but altogether happy comment, she would have understood better the value of her own unselfish example.



## EVERYBODY SURPRISED BUT ADDIE.

ONE First of April — that is, the day when many delight in playing tricks upon each other — the girls and boys in Miss Teachem's primary school had been having a merry time.

Freddy Boyce had pinned a long curled shaving to Tommy Brown's new jacket, and Tommy had walked proudly about the playground a good while before he found it out; Mary Lee had sent Carrie Lee to the front gate to see "somebody very particular," and "somebody very particular" had proved to be Bounce, the big dog that lived next door; and Kitty Clover had told Sarah Raft to "open her mouth and shut her eyes for something good," and then ran slyly away, leaving Sarah standing under the grape arbor looking silly enough. It was just then that Addie Winwill said, "O girls, I'm going to play a trick on



## EVERYBODY SURPRISED BUT ADDIE.

Margery Hall. You know her folks are so poor she never brings anything for her lunch but a slice of bread and butter in a strawberry-basket. She won't be out for ten minutes, 'cause she's being kept in for not knowing her jography. And I am going to take the bread and give it to Bounce, and we'll see how funny she'll look when she can't find it."

"Oh, don't, Addie!" said some of the girls and boys. "She'll be so hungry, poor little thing!"

"*Do*, Addie," said the others; "it'll be such fun!"

And away went Addie, carrying the lunch-box in which she brought her own lunch with her, to the closet where the strawberry-basket hung under Margery's hat and shawl, and in a moment or two she came back with the bread and threw it over the fence to Bounce, who swallowed it in a second.

"Shame!" cried those who had said "Don't!"

But those who had said "Do!" began to laugh, and they laughed loudly when they saw Margery coming out of the closet with her basket. And as she lifted the napkin they shouted, "April Fool!"

But much to their surprise, instead of the look of





THEY WAIT TO SEE ADDIE OPEN THE BASKET.







## EVERYBODY SURPRISED BUT ADDIE.

disappointment and the tears they expected to see, the brightest of smiles shone on the child's pale face. And no wonder. The slice of bread was gone, to be sure, but in its place was a nice biscuit-sandwich, a thick piece of raisin-cake, a large orange and a paper of chocolate caramels.

Then came the turn of the "Don't" girls and boys, as she took these things out one after the other, to laugh and shout "April Fool!" while the "Do" party never said a word, but looked at Addie Winwill as though they'd all like to slap her.

Slap her, indeed! Hers was the only really pleasant First-of-April joke I ever heard of.



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

**W**ERE I to ask a boy or a girl to-day if they were going to walk in the Floral Procession, and who was to be partner, how they would stare ! If they were polite, as well as curious, I think they would say the next minute, " We don't know what you mean, ma'am. Will you please tell us ? "

With all the pleasure in the world ; for the very question that seems so strange now, for weeks before Fourth of July was the all-absorbing one to us young Boston folks a generation ago, and how much longer I do not venture to say.

Thirty years ago a certain little girl, whose memory of those days is clearer than her memory of last year, walked home from school arm in arm with her favorite schoolmate, Nelly Alden. I think, to be accurate, their arms were round each other's waist.



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

“ You’ll walk with me, Ellie,” said Nelly, “ *sure*, won’t you ? You never did since you were born, and it will be splendid. Just as if I had a really sister like you and Hetty ! ”

“ You know, Nelly, I love you dearly ; but if Hetty was home, I couldn’t walk with you in the Floral, for Hetty and I always have been everywhere together and done everything together. We just began together, you know.”

Hetty and Ellie were twins, and all their little lives hitherto had been inseparable ; but mamma was ill, and deft little Hetty had gone with her to be her handmaiden for a few weeks at the seashore this very July. And so it happened that Ellie and Nelly — Brownie and Goldy — were to be mates in the Floral Procession.

But what was the Floral Procession ? That is just what I am going to tell you.

Before Boston was so big or so full as it is now, we had very different ways of celebrating Independence Day from any that would be possible to-day. Of course there were bell-ringing and cannon, fire-crackers and pop-guns, regattas and picnics, fireworks



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

and balloons, processions and speeches. They do all those things now, too, only a great deal more and bigger and noisier; but one of the things we did have and you don't have, was the Floral Procession.

Who started the idea I cannot say; but I have a vague impression that Mr. Charles Barnard and the Warren-street Chapel (now Warrenton street) had a great deal to do with it. The children of the different Sunday-schools in the vicinity of Boston — suburbs some were then, but now a part of the great city — Roxbury, Dorchester, Charlestown, Cambridge, and I don't know how many more, gathered under the charge of their superintendents and teachers; the earliest appearing about sunrise, new-comers swelling the ranks from time to time, until the striking of the clock warned the laggard to hurry up if they did not wish to forfeit their places in the procession. The girls were dressed in white, with or without straw hats, preferably without. In that case a perfect flower-garden of a wreath protected the otherwise bare head. Sashes and shoulder-knots of gay ribbon fluttered in the breeze, garlands hung from the shoulders and trimmed the dresses. Every child



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

looked as much as possible like a special Queen of the May, for even the poorer children could find plenty of wild flowers and trailing vines, and often the simplest, scantiest frock was the prettiest, when the buds and blossoms from wood and field, and the graceful clematis, had transformed an ordinary child into a dryad.

The boys wore white linen, or light nankeen suits; if not a whole suit, always white trousers, and the jacket made gay with flowers in the button-holes and a close wreath round the straw hats. Every child, beside their personal decorations, carried some floral treasure, either a bouquet, a garland, a flower-basket, or a spray of great white day-lilies, each provided according to the fancy or taste of the child, or those at home who were interested.

Each school of any size had its own "band," as it was called; though sometimes a fife and drum was all it numbered. Children march better to music, for every one knows it takes the tired out of little feet if a band play in hearing with a good lively rhythm.

The children were paired, as nearly as possible, by sizes, and were enjoined to keep close ranks after they



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

had fairly started. There were gay banners with pretty devices, chiefly patriotic, bright flags and floral arches, and each school had also a pennon with the name of the town or society in large letters—a sort of rallying-point for the classes.

One delegation after another arrived at the place appointed—if my memory serves me it was in front of the chapel—and a brief address was made, which I do not think interested the children so much as it did the speaker, for the little feet were impatient for the start.

A pretty sight it was to those who watched the long procession of children, flower-wreathed and flower-crowned—a prettier forest than came from Dunsinane—winding in and out of the crooked streets of dear old Boston. Up and down where the handsome houses stood then, replaced long since by bustling stores, past windows and balconies thronged with eager spectators who came from far and near to see the wonderful Floral Procession.

The drums beat, the bands played, the boys cheered, the people applauded, the mayor made a speech, and then on went the Floral Procession, round the mall,





THE PROCESSION. — "A PRETTY SIGHT IT WAS."







## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

past Colonnade Row, up Beacon Street, by the old Hancock house — would it were standing now! — and on to the Common — which meant fairy-land to us, especially those of us who lived in Roxbury or Dorchester and knew little of Boston proper, except through a jolting ride in an “hourly,” the acme of honor in my childhood.

There was no Public Garden in those days, no Back Bay land, but a great deal of Back Bay *water*; but the Common was free as air, as its donors meant it should be. Gravel or greensward, rich man’s son or street gamin, all could roam at will. My childhood brings up no memory of the stern warning: “Keep off the grass.”

But the charm of Boston Common on Independence Day was not in the green grass nor the big trees — we had plenty of those in Roxbury; the wonder and delight was in the huge tents, pavilions and booths, where all sorts of mild refreshments were obtainable for a consideration, from the festive ginger-cakes so attractive in their gilt and so delicious in spices, to the pink lemonade in tubs, served in glass cups with handles, each cup having its fragment of



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

lemon-peel and its one strawberry floating on top. I think the pretty color gave the flavor, for, as I recall it, the suggestions of either sweet or sour are very feeble.

It was nectar then, however—who would not drink the drink of the gods when it was obtainable for three cents! A *small* glass could be had for two! The ginger-cakes cost one cent. But a cent in those days was a dignified affair; larger than a modern quarter, usually dingy from long service, and giving a peculiar greenish tinge and coppery odor to the hot little hand that grasped it long and close.

Under those tents ice-cream was sold, not in saucers, but in funny little narrow glasses that would have brimmed over with a tablespoonful of liquid, and had such a generous overflowing bounty of aspect when the spoonful of pink ice was dexterously hitched on to it (one had to be experienced in the business to do it artistically), and looked to the childish eyes like a Santa Sophia of delight! How coyly we assaulted it round the edges; scraped a bit here, a bit there! chasing a truant drop on its way down the side of the glass, daintily pecking at the pink drift with the point



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

of the spoon, making twenty tastes where a modern boy or girl would find but one mouthful ! How long an ice-cream could be made to last ! That bliss of possession was always too deep for words. If impetuous, it was not at all questionable to ask for two spoons with one glass, and then the assault was carried on simultaneously, but with perfect impartiality, from opposite sides. It was a test of confidence, as well as affection, to eat ice-cream "on halves." The fun was about as good, and cost each of us five cents then instead of ten.

There were whirligigs and fandangoes, there were Savoyards with white mice and marmosets. There were Swiss bell-ringers, and Tyrolese peasants with broad hats and yards and yards of green ribbon. They sang, "Buy a Broom," and had the funny little brooms, whittled out of pine, in bunches ready for sale. Feather dusters have taken their place, but I would go some distance to get one of those queer fly-brooms to-day ; the handle was fairly smooth, the strands were thin shavings drawn in some peculiar way over the edge of the knife, so that they curled in regular spirals, like the spills one makes for lamp-



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

lighters ; a sort of fancy rosette was whittled from the stick as a heading, but the whole thing was one piece of wood.

Except in special cases the responsibility for the children ceased after they were landed on the Common ; for in the course of the day they were joined by father or brothers, or big sisters, or else found their way home alone as best they could. It seems to me that the beginning of the day was brighter than the ending, but that is often the way with holidays.

Now you know what the Floral Procession was, we must go back to Goldie and Brownie, who were laying their plans together so lovingly the night before the Fourth.

“What are you going to carry, Nelly?”

“Our white Arum lilies are out, and papa says I may have a bunch of those,” said Nelly.

“Oh, that’s lovely ! you’ll look just like the angel in mamma’s picture with the Annunciation lilies !” and Brownie gave Goldie an enthusiastic hug and squeeze in anticipation.

“What shall you take, Ellie?”

“A big bunch of roses. The Harrisons are back-



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

ward this year, so they will be just right, and the damask roses and the late white roses and lots of sweet-brier. Dick says if he cuts them before he goes to bed and puts them in a jug, they'll be open just right in the morning, and I couldn't cut them myself. He's going down the harbor with Sam Langmaid fishing, and they have to start before daylight."

"Won't he meet you on the Common in the afternoon?"

"Oh, yes! at four o'clock. You'll call for me, Goldie, won't you?"

"Yes, at six; good-by."

It wasn't half so much fun to get ready for the Floral Procession as if Hetty had been with her, and some of Ellie's blunders wouldn't have happened if mamma had been at home. As it was, aunt Hepsy had seen that Ellie's white dress was in order; and the little frock was spread out on the spare-chamber bed, with her blue sash and shoulder-knots, her gipsy hat of open-work Tuscan braid, her open-work stockings and mitts, and her best light morocco shoes with blue rosettes. Not the wisest wear for little feet that were to walk for miles in a July sun, over



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blistering pavements. Ellie's garlands were to be of ivy, because they kept fresh so much longer. Dick had clipped those and stuck them into the big blue ewer. The roses he would cut by starlight, long after Ellie had gone to bed.

The sun's first rays woke the little sleeper from a perfect fairy-dream of fays and flowers and processions that reached beyond the stars. Before Ellie's eyes were half open she was in the big "hat tub" for her morning bath, and came out as fresh and rosy as a water-nymph. Aunt Hepsy wasn't up. Somehow, elderly aunts are not so apt as mammas to get up at daylight to see that little girls are rightly started, but Dinah had breakfast ready for her pet, and Chloe was very good-natured about fastening the wreaths and hooking the dress, which squeezed a little, having shrunk a little in washing, or possibly Ellie had grown.

When her mitts were on and her gipsy tied, Chloe tipped the cheval glass for Ellie to see herself. A little glow of vanity touched her, and she wished heartily that mamma and Hetty could see how nice she looked!



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Nothing was wanting but the roses, and those were to be on the porch ready for her in the big Chinese jug.

Poor Ellie ! Joyfully she tripped over the porch to the corner for her roses. Alas ! Sport or Jip, or some other mischievous dog, had tipped over the jug, the water was spilt, and all the beautiful roses were either torn in the canine frolic, or withered and drooping.

The big tears came, and the day, so bright a moment before, was darkly overcast indeed.

“O Chloe, what shall I do ? There’s not a single rose left, and nothing fit to cut in the garden, and everything’s wet with the heavy dew ! I can’t go in the Floral Procession without any flowers !”

“Dontee cry, missy ! Chloe get de pretty roses, nebber fade all day ! Won’t no harm come ! Put de roses back ’gain all same !”

In an instant Chloe was in and out of the parlor, bringing in triumph a vase of lovely feather-roses that uncle Will had brought from Mexico ; they were exquisite imitations of nature made by the Mexican women—for old association’s sake I bought



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some like them at the Mexican exhibit at the Centennial. They were always covered with a glass shade, and were a justly prized curiosity.

The squabby vase that held them was of dark blue china, with a medallion of painted figures, Watteau shepherdesses and cupids, as priceless as the flowers. All Chloe's efforts failed to draw the bouquet from the vase: the flowers were wired or cemented in.

"Never missy mind—vase make de roses pretty, prettier—jess hug de vase tight—nobody mind."

Ellie's only thought was of the pretty flowers; impulse and expediency sometimes blind older and wiser eyes than hers. She took the vase and the beautiful feather-roses without ever questioning the right or wrong.

It was time for Nelly, and our little maiden walked down the long avenue to meet her "partner." Mr. Alden's errand boy was at the gate, with word that Nelly had sprained her foot, not badly, but enough for Dr. John to forbid her walking in the procession, and Miss Ellie must go without her.

That was a sore trial indeed; but all the same our heroine marched bravely on alone; fell into rank



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

under Miss Blake's eye, not caring much who was her partner, now that Goldie wasn't; hugging her blue vase all the harder when she thought of the disappointment, when she had hoped to have had Goldilock with the Arum lilies by her side, and her own fresh, fragrant roses, instead of these feather things that were pretty to look at, but pricked and tickled her nose and chin, no matter how she held them.

Somehow it was harder to hold a vase than a bouquet, though it was not very big; and long before their delegation reached the chapel, she wished the things were safe home under the glass shade.

The excitement of the march and the music kept her up pretty well, and sometimes she would hear something said at the windows, or in the balconies, about "that picturesque child with the blue vase;" but she guessed they didn't know how tired she was!

When the Floral Procession entered the Common, Ellie's real woe began. The others flung away their flowers if they wished, or hung the garlands on the fence, or swung the baskets on their arms, and frolicked and romped as freely as possible; but she,



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poor child, was as badly off as Sinbad with the Old Man of the Sea upon his shoulders ; only her burden was a blue-china vase and a bunch of red and yellow and white feather-roses. She dared not lay it down, and every one she knew was too busy having a good time for her to ask them to take it for her. She wanted some pink lemonade, she was terribly thirsty with the heat and dust, but she couldn't crowd in there under the tent with those flowers. She poked one hand into her pocket and got one loose penny and bought a gilt ginger-cake ; but her little snap purse took two hands to open, and she had only one. She ate the ginger-cake, and was thirstier than ever. Oh for one of those delicious, heaping glasses of ice-cream ! Such good times, and she so close to them and not in them !

Poor little girlie ! after all these years my thoughts go back to her most pitifully, as she crept away from the happy, thoughtless crowd, with her gay vase and bright flowers, now a most intolerable burden, and sat down on a low bench under a big tree, whose kindly shade was more like sympathy than anything she had met all day.



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

She was too miserable even to wipe away the tears that welled up, brimmed over, and fell, making a way for themselves down her hot, dusty cheeks. A forlorn picture indeed! And how her poor feet ached in those new morocco shoes! Even the blue rosettes were no solace. How long she sat there I do not know; the tears shut out everything. And when a kindly voice said:

“What is the trouble little girl? Can I help you?”

She could see nothing but a motherly face stooping over hers, while a soft cambric handkerchief wiped away some of the tears, and the motherly figure sat down beside her and gently drew the blue vase from her close clasp.

“Let me hold this for you, my dear, and tell me all about it.”

The flood-gates were open, and Ellie told the whole story: that mamma and Hetty were away, and Goldie sprained her foot, and her real roses were spoiled, and she took the feather-roses and the blue vase, and she didn't think they'd be so heavy, and now she couldn't play, nor swing, nor eat ice-cream—



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

in short, all Ellie's misery was poured out, and lightened in the very telling.

She had not noticed that the lady had beckoned to a serving-man, to whom she gave a brief order. He soon returned with a tray of ices, cakes and lemonade, and a pitcher of water.

"Take this napkin, dear, and pour some water over it and cool your face. You look so tired and warm."

How delicious that cool, wet napkin was, and how brave, and fresh, and tidy Ellie felt once more when the dust and tears were wiped away! She had a smile already on her lips; the smile turned to a glad, happy little laugh when her kind neighbor handed her an ice-cream, and drank her health in pink lemonade.

Then—can you imagine Ellie's bliss? (no, you can't, unless you've lugged round a dreadful blue-china vase with a bunch of feather-roses in it, for four mortal hours!)—I repeat it: can you imagine Ellie's bliss when the lady said, "Peter shall put the vase and the flowers in the carriage and look after them while we go and see the fandango and the whirligig."



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

So Ellie went off hand in hand with the dear lady, and had a good time after all, no matter whether she deserved it or not.

It was nice to find that the kindly lady knew her grandmamma; they had been schoolmates long, long ago. It seemed pleasanter than if it had been what Dick would call "a real out-and-out stranger."

An hour or two of fandango, whirligig, and merry-go-round, Swiss bell-ringers and Tyrolese peasants, was enough for the little girl and her tired feet. She spent her quarter on two pretty brooms made gay with knots of ribbon—one for mamma, and one for Hetty.

Then the dear lady said, "I am going to drive out to Roxbury, and will leave you and your treasures at the Cedars, if you will go with me now. I really do not think you ought to stay here all day alone. We will see Mr. Kneeland before we go, so that Dick when he comes will not be anxious."

"Thank you very much, ma'am," said Ellie; "I would like to go home."

When the dear, kind lady said "good-by" to Ellie, she gave her a card to show to her grand-



## THE FLORAL PROCESSION.

mamma some day in Kadesh. It was a small, thin, glazed visiting card, that would look old-fashioned now, but Ellie treasured it for many a year; for the name it bore was one endeared to thousands who never met the owner face to face, and knew of her only through the great, kind, loving heart that throbbed with benevolence and patriotism to the very end of her long, useful life.

It was Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis, whose memory is not only forever associated with the preservation of Mt. Vernon, but is fragrant in hearts of myriads for whom she did just such unobtrusive, kindly deeds as this which took the pain and misery out of Ellie's Floral Procession.



## A VEXED QUESTION.

NOT long ago a lady told me that whenever her small nephew had a story told or read to him he always asked, "What is the moral of it?"

Now, as I dipped my pen into the ink previous to writing this real incident in the lives of two little girls, what should come into my mind but that little boy's question, "What is the moral of it?"

Candor impels me to confess I do not know; however, there was a certain vexed question pertaining to it that some one of you may be able to decide.

One afternoon two little sisters of five and six were in their play-room taking tea. This play-room was a large sunny apartment in the third story of a big country house, a house with hosts of rooms, long rambling corridors, and stair-flights so high that Buz, the elder one, used to go thump, bump, down some



## A VEXED QUESTION.

stairway every little while, and afterwards sit sorrowfully swathed in bandages in her mother's room, full opportunity being given her to reflect upon her heedless way of doing things. Fuz, the younger sister, never fell down them, for the reason that she was given to be slower and more cautious than her small whirlwind of a relative.

In their play-room were their treasures in the shape of clay and wooden dolls, and two big rag-babies named Lucretia and Marcretia. In the centre of the room stood a cunning little table flanked by two as cunning little chairs; and here Buz and Fuz were accustomed to give an intermittent series of dinners and teas. They had one pewter, one wooden, and one new china set of dishes. The china set was to them something very nice and precious, and after considerable discussion, quite animated of course, they had divided it in this wise: sugar-bowl, Buz's; sugar-bowl lid, Fuz's; teapot, Buz's; teapot lid, Fuz's. At this point Fuz, although a meek child, began to think she had too much lid and too little bowl; but Buz generously allowed her the whole of the cream pitcher, handle and all. After this they





TAKING TEA.







## A VEXED QUESTION.

found it easy to divide equally the plates, and cups and saucers, and were happy in joint ownership.

Upon the afternoon in which I have brought them to your notice they were enjoying a grand supper served up in fine style on the china dishes. Buz, as Mrs. Jones, dispensed hospitalities; Fuz, as Mrs. Smith with an interesting family of babies, graciously received them. Their real bill of fare was a big red apple, which they had carefully sliced up. Each slice was then cut and scalloped in an intricate manner, and was changed by their vivid imaginations into fish, flesh and fowl.

Suddenly, breaking in upon this idyllic feast, their mother's voice floated up to them from the lower hall: "Children, I want you."

"Cookies!" said Buz, with a rush.

"Doughnuts!" prophesied Fuz.

But their lovely mother, standing in a waiting attitude at the stair-foot, had no cakes for them. "We have company," she said: "Mr. Rocket and his wife and little girl. Come into the parlor." Now the children knew Mr. Rocket very slightly, and they had never seen his wife or daughter; so it was



## A VEXED QUESTION.

with some constraint they followed mamma in, to be duly presented to, and become acquainted with, the little girl. She was considerably older than they were, and was that disagreeable creature — a spoiled child. Although the youngest member of her family she ruled her seniors with a rod of iron. “Dear Martha is so delicate,” her mother sometimes said apologetically, “that we must not cross her.”

She was a very dark-skinned little girl, with positive ways and a rather scornful cast of countenance. But Buz, vivacious and sunny, was never deterred by timidity from making friendly overtures to any one, and before long she was inviting Miss Rocket to come up to their play-room.

Fuz felt that propriety demanded that she too should second the invitation. “Yes, do come please, little black girl,” she said, blushing painfully, for she was the shyest little mortal that ever was.

Immediately, Buz gave her sister *such* a look, and ran to her mother. “O mother,” she whispered, “Fuz calls our company *a little black girl!*”

Mrs. Harland, excusing herself, led the wondering Fuz into the hall. She didn’t want to scold her



## A VEXED QUESTION.

honest little daughter; but she did want her to know that she must not speak every thought so openly. "Fuz," she said gravely, "I am very sorry you were so impolite as to call Martha Rocket "little black girl." She is not a negro, and if she were it would be very unkind to mention her color when speaking to her."

Fuz raised two eyes like violets in an April shower. Oh, how mortified and ashamed she felt! She went by herself and wept a little weep, then went shyly up to the play-room where Buz had taken Martha.

Martha was both patronizing and critical, and found flaws in almost everything. Her comparisons made Buz uneasy. *She* had an ever so much nicer chair and table at home. *Her* play-room had a carpet on the floor. Clay dolls were poor things. *She* had a wax doll with real hair, and the loveliest eyes, and a pink silk dress; at which ravishing description Buz gave Lucretia a spiteful push into the corner, and looked disdainfully on her clay children; for Buz never liked to be inferior in anything.

Meantime Fuz, whose simple soul was never disturbed by comparisons, came up to Martha, meekly



## A VEXED QUESTION.

anxious to make amends for her impoliteness.

“This is our new china tea-set, *little white girl*.”

Miss Rocket turned to stare at her in astonishment, and Buz pounced on her at once in an excessively disagreeable manner. “Fuz,” she said in a shrill whisper, “if you keep on talking *so*, I’ll go right down and tell mother, and she’ll whip you!”

Poor Fuz experienced a dim, heart-rending consciousness that the world was in some way out of joint. Her very good was evil spoken of. She didn’t want to stay up here another bit. Buz was cruel. The new girl said, “What does she mean?” She went out with swelling heart and a big lump in her throat, and hurried down, a forlorn little figure, to sob out her misery in papa’s empty study.

But Buz never minded her absence, she was so bent on enjoying the society of her new playmate. Martha became excessively sociable, and began to praise things. She greatly admired a pretty bead bag that old Mrs. Dominick had given Buz ; whereat Buz gave it away to her at once, for she was fond of making presents, not so much, however, to Fuz as to other girls.



## A VEXED QUESTION.

"Oh, you sweet thing!" said Martha, pocketing it without demur. "Dear me, isn't your china tea-set cunning? I haven't anything like it — how I wish I had! You have plenty of sets without this. I do wish I could have the teapot."

Buz twisted uneasily, and blushed. She always liked to do things on a grand scale, even if she repented in sackcloth and ashes afterwards; and for her now to refuse Martha the teapot would seem insufferable meanness. Possibly her idea of meanness was at fault; but she is not held up as a *pattern*.

"You can have it," was her answer. Martha eagerly possessed herself of her new treasure. If gratitude is a lively sense of favors to come, at that moment she was excessively grateful. "You are just the sweetest girl!" she said, twining her arm about Buz. "You're lots prettier than your sister. She says such queer things. You don't. Your curls look like corn-silk, and you're so cunning I just want to squeeze you. I love you. *Don't you think I ought to have something else with the teapot?*"

"Yes," answered Buz, drinking in this delightful



## A VEXED QUESTION.

flattery as a humming-bird sips nectar. "And you can have the sugar-bowl!"

"You darling!" cried Martha, with a rapturous kiss; "you are just as sweet as you look. You are the nicest girl I ever visited!"

"Don't you want the cream pitcher?" asked Buz, "and the plates and cups and saucers?"

"I ought to have them to go with my part."

"You can have them," cried Buz, with a spasm of generosity, "the whole set!"

Martha couldn't even pause to kiss Buz now. She hastily packed her present in its box, and started to go down-stairs. "I'll just carry them down and put them by papa's portmanteau in the hall," she said, "so that he can put them in it for me before we go. We've a portmanteau, because we've been visiting for a week."

Going down, she met Fuz coming up. "See," she said, holding out the box, "Buz gave me this."

Fuz could scarcely believe her eyes. She rushed on up, threw open the door, and confronted Buz:

"You never gave *it* away, Buz — that girl — our tea-set!"



## A VEXED QUESTION.

"Stop talking. I gave it to her. It's not ours any more," said Buz, feeling that Fuz might find something to say about the matter ; and as the oldest she never allowed Fuz to criticise her actions.

"Oh, oh !" wailed Fuz, unmindful how loud she howled. "My lids — my cream pitcher — your things — my things — all of them — I will tell mother !"

Buz would have locked her unpleasant sister in the room if she had dared, but Fuz was too quick for her, and had flown down stairs.

No matter where she had gone, Buz knew she too would receive a summons there soon, and she was not disappointed ; for in a short space her mother called her, and she could not disregard the command.

"I couldn't help it," she said, anxious to exonerate herself. "She wanted it, and so I gave it to her. It was mine."

"No, it was not yours," said her mother severely. "It belonged equally to your sister, and you had no right to give it away. I am tired, Buz, of this heedless and wrong generosity of yours. When you gave away my pretty tortoise-handled pen-knife to Belle Morgan last week, because she asked you for it,



## A VEXED QUESTION.

you promised me you would never give away anything without my knowledge again. And how long ago was it you gave away that nice little wire basket old Grandma Passum took such trouble to get for you? Your heedless way of giving things causes me much pain. Now shall I send you to ask that little girl to give you back the tea-set? You have almost broken your sister's heart!"

"O mother, dear mother, don't do that!" cried Buz in consternation; "oh, I will be good. I will never again give anything away unless you say I can. Only, don't make me ask for it back again. I will be good, I promise!"

She cried so violently that her mother paused, perplexed as to her right course of action; and just then papa put his head in the door. "Isn't tea ready yet, dear? It's six o'clock, and Mr. Rocket wants to take the seven-o'clock stage. Can't you hurry matters up a little?"

Happy respite for Buz. Mother washed her discolored face and bade her come quietly to the tea-table. As for Fuz, to expect the attendance of such a Niobe was useless.



## A VEXED QUESTION.

The supper-bell rang, the company came down, and then Fuz went hurriedly up-stairs. Near the hall door stood the Rocket portmanteau, black and fat ; close by, but not within it, stood the box.

Fuz went down on her knees, and with eager hands shoved back the lid ; her hot tears fell fast on the revealed dishes ; she hesitated about running away with them and hiding until that wicked girl was gone !

But no, she would not do that. Only her very own share would she take out ! Off came the lids, poor lonely things. Out came the cream pitcher and her plates and cups and saucers ; and then, re-covering the box, she went hurriedly up to the play-room. There she sat for a long time hugging her regained treasures until mother called her, and she knew the Rockets had taken flight. She came down in triumph. " See ! " she said, " I took out *my* part. I took them out of that girl's box ! "

" How mean ! " cried Buz, springing from the chair where she was dejectedly sitting. " Why, *you've stolen !* You've broken the commandment ! "

A picture of justice and righteous indignation, she stood there scorning her sister.



### A VEXED QUESTION.

It was the culmination of poor Fuz's woes ! The crockery fell unheeded to the floor as she hid her frightened face in the safe refuge of her mother's lap.

"I never stole!" came forth her half-stifled cry. "I did not break the commandment. I only took back *my own things* that I never gave away. They were mine — only mine ! Mother, did I steal ?"

And to this day, with the added weight of years upon her, Fuz still says dubiously, "Did I steal?"



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.



"O MY MARTHA ABBY," SAID POLLY,  
RAPTUROUSLY.

ONLY a hen!" ended Jack in great contempt. "As if anybody ever did, or ever could, go to school from the support of an old hen! Don't be absurd, Polly."

Jack's sister shook her head somewhat sadly.

"But, for all that, a hen can lay eggs," said she.

"Ho, ho, ho!" jeered Jack. "The idea of that ridiculous old fossil's laying an egg! Abner, O Abner, hear this: Polly means to go to school at



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

Augusta, on the eggs her hen, Martha Abby Judson, lays, and Martha Abby's a hundred and fifty years old, if she's a day."

Abner, the hired man, leaned over the fence and contemplated Polly. Jack rocked to and fro in a convulsion of glee.

"Martha Abby Judson lay an egg! O Abner! An egg—Martha Abby!—an egg!"

But Polly never smiled. Neither did Martha Abby Judson. Do you suppose that fowl was not aware that she was being made sport of? Of course she knew. She stood solemnly balancing herself on one leg, her head drawn down between her shoulders, ruffling her scanty feathers, and giving a series of croaks which sounded as if made by means of a rusty file.

"Abner," said Polly, soberly, "it's very unrespectful in you to laugh. My mother says I *may* go to the Augusta Female Cemetery if I can raise the money; and I can sell all the eggs my own hen lays, and there'll be dozens and dozens."

"She means the Female *Seminary*," cried Jack, with a fresh giggle.



POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

"What'll you be going to school in Augusty for?" asked Abner.

"To learn 'lit'chur and the arts,'" answered Polly quietly.

Off went the wicked Jack in another burst of laughter.

"She means *literature*; and 'the arts' is to work 'God bless our Home' on card-board with green worsted."

"It isn't green worsted, it's steel beads," interrupted Polly, hotly. "Come away, Martha Abby Judson! You're a bad boy, Jack Simmons."

"*Craw, crawl, crawl!* You're a bad boy!" croaked Martha Abby, stalking after her mistress with as much haughty dignity as a lame leg done up in red flannel would allow.

A very lean and scrawny specimen was Martha Abby. She always looked as if she were indulging a private grief. And as for being "a hundred and fifty years old," one would hardly have been surprised to hear that she had clucked in the *May-flower*.

"My own Martha Abby, come into your coop,"



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

said Polly tenderly. "Don't you mind that *viperous* boy, nor that *receited* Abner. Here's a nest for you; and don't you think you could lay a few dozens eggs before the price goes down? I do so want to learn lit'chur and the arts, Martha Abby."

"*Cluck!*" replied Martha Abby, briefly. From the tone, Polly could hardly tell whether to hope or despair.

Taking the benefit of the doubt, she concluded to hope; and hope she did for weeks and weeks. Every morning she visited the barn. Never an egg did she find. So time passed until one rainy morning in summer.

"Any eggs?" inquired the uncrushable Jack at the breakfast table. Patiently Polly looked up from her plate to answer, when, "*Cluck, cluck, crawl!*"

There, on the threshold, stood Martha Abby Judson in a state of intense excitement.

"She's come in to get dry," exclaimed Polly.

But no. Something more than wet feathers was evidently the matter.

"*Cluck, cluck, crawl!*"

There was a tinge of triumph in that last wheeze,



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

and Martha Abby was hobbling out again in what might jocosely be termed a hurry.

“*Cluck ! cluck !cluck !*”

“ I do believe,” began Polly, “ I verily believe —”

Without finishing her sentence, out into the rain, down to the barn she sped. There was nothing in the nest. Polly must wait till Martha Abby herself should arrive.

Now she must follow her hen across the barn to a remote corner. Here Martha Abby both halted and ceased to halt (which you see is a 'joke ! ) and stood casting suspicious yet rather joyful glances at one tiny brown *egg*.

“ O my Martha Abby,” cried Polly rapturously, “ I *knew* you could ! I was sure you would ! Oh, my duck of a dear, what shall we do ? ”

“ *Cluck !* we'll begin to sit,” quoth Martha Abby, crouching on her one egg with as much complacency as if it had been the “dozens and dozens ” of prophecy.

“ She's laid an egg ! she's laid an egg ! ” cried Polly, dancing into the house.

“ How many ? ” demanded Jack. “ One, but a — *lion !* ”



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

That sentence, though highly poetical, was unfortunate ; for it immediately became next to impossible to prevent Jack from going in all haste to the barn, to "see the beast in his native jungle, and to hear him roar."

With what eagerness did grave little Polly count the days before she could hear the first "peep" of the coming chick.

"And now you are so encouraged, Martha Abby, you will surely lay more eggs, and *those* we will sell. I just let you hatch this one to cheer your droops, my lovey. But we'll raise money out of the rest, and I'll have new gowns, and I'll go to school, and I learn 'lit'chur and the arts,' and — and I must, you know, I *must* have an education."

In the mean time Polly flew about, helping her mother to put the house in order for the coming session of the Supreme Court.

For the village where our Polly lived, was the county shire town. Twice every year the judges and lawyers arrived, and the prisoners were brought out of the brick jail to be "sat upon," as Jack said.

Those were gala days to the village folk. Every



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

one kept open house and entertained the "court."

Mrs. Simmons' mansion being the largest in the village, she always welcomed the grandest man ; namely, Judge Elihu Hitherfly of Augusta.

Mrs. Simmons herself felt somewhat honored by the patronage of this august person. But as for Polly, she was much overpowered by his grandeur, and always quaked in her shoes when he condescended to address her in his big voice, which reminded her of the rumbling of distant thunder.

Jack's awe was not so great. He was obliged to act as body-servant to Judge Hitherfly whenever that worthy appeared. Not only was he called upon to brush the judge's clothes, black his boots, run his errands, but every night he was required to repair to the guest-chamber, and then and there tuck the portly embodiment of the law into bed!

Do you wonder that Jack refused to worship his honor, and can you not see that it was no light matter to receive Judge Elihu Hitherfly under the Simmons' roof?

Polly was, as I said, very busy. But she found ample leisure to watch that egg; and in due time



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

came her reward! The morning at last dawned when "peep!" out of the egg crept what might almost have been mistaken for the ghost of a chicken. It was the exact image of its mother. Just as lean, just as scrawny, just as ancient-looking, just as mournful.

The irrepressible Jack set up a shout.

"You might as well call it *Lamentation*, and done with it!" cried he.

There could be found no other name half as appropriate, and henceforth "Lamentation Judson" could be seen roaming sadly about the hen-yard with its melancholy mamma. But Polly loved it quite as tenderly as if it had been a beauty.

"Soon you and your mother will both lay eggs for me," she said cheerfully. "An' I need you both."

She even thought of inviting Judge Hitherfly to come out and view her darlings. She wondered if that great man could discern, in spite of their exteriors, the real worth of her pets.

It really seemed as if those fowls themselves desired the Judge's notice. For, the very day he arrived, just as the family had sat down to dinner, a



MARTHA ABBY JUDDSON SURPRISES THE FAMILY.









## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

"*cluck, cluck, crawl,*" and a faint "*peep, peep,*" were heard, and into the dining-room limped Martha Abby, followed by her attenuated child.

How Lamentation ever climbed the doorsteps, remains a mystery to this day; but there she stood, as large as life, which is saying very little.

The Judge stared over his gold-bowed spectacles. Polly started from her chair, but paused, struck by a sudden consternation. For—how can I tell it?—that respectable bird, that sedate fowl, that heretofore solemn Martha Abby Judson, spread her wings, mounted flapping into the air, and before the startled family could breathe, alighted,—horror of horrors!—on the very top of Judge Elihu Hitherfly's head. Here she crouched, as if she approved of such a soft nest; and, "*Crawl, — crawl, — cr-aw!*" said she.

There was dire confusion, as you can well believe. Mrs. Simmons seized the hen with both hands. But Martha Abby was not to be trifled with; and when she was dragged from her perch, in her claws she held a glossy, well-oiled black wig.

Polly never knew what happened after that, for she turned and fled. She was disgraced forever.



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

Awful visions of a prison-cell rose before her. What if she, Polly Simmons, should be dragged into court for the crime of owning such a hen ! Shut into her own room, Polly trembled.

All at once a new idea flashed into her mind. Could no reparation be made ? But this new idea made Polly tremble even more. At last it was a very sad little girl who stole down the back stairs. It was a tearful little girl who hovered over a sauce-pan on the kitchen stove. It was a pitiful little face opposite the insulted Judge at the tea-table.

For, by Judge Hitherfly's plate was a small platter. On the platter was much gravy ; in the midst of the gravy lay —

“ Why, what is this, Polly ? ” asked Mrs. Simmons.

“ Mother,” mother, cried Polly, the scalding tears chasing one another down her cheeks, “ Mother, it's — *Lamentation !* ”

It was indeed ; for the sin of her mother, Lamentation had been required to give up her innocent life.

And did the Judge accept such an offering ? I regret to state that he did. That is, he ate the gravy, and he would have devoured the flesh from Lamenta-



tion's tiny bones had there been any flesh to devour. As it was, he smacked his cruel lips over the bones themselves, and remarked, "Very good, very well seasoned!" to Polly's mingled satisfaction and anguish.

It was Jack who came to Polly about nine o'clock that evening.

"That's the last of *him* for to-night," said he, pointing to the Judge's chamber. "I've tucked him in with a vengeance. And he says you're to come to him in the parlor to-morrow, Polly, at eight o'clock, *pre-cisely*. See you do it, if you know what's good for you."

Polly dared not disobey such a summons, and at "eight o'clock, *pre-cisely*," she crept into the parlor.

There stood the Judge. He gave a resounding "Hem!" which made Polly jump. Then he opened his mouth and spake.

"I am given to understand by your mother, young girl, that you entertain a commendable desire to progress in learning."

Polly glanced timidly up, and then down.

"I find myself interested in your welfare," the Judge continued in his rumbling voice. "The man-



## POLLY'S NEST-EGG.

ner in which you have conducted under late trying circumstances has shown me that your mind is not of an ordinary cast. A principle of sincere though mistaken justice is worth cultivating. I have offered for myself and Mrs. Hitherfly to consider you as our guest for a year, in order that you may avail yourself of the privileges of the Augusta Female Seminary. Be ready, if you please, to accompany me home next Wednesday."

Half of this address Polly by no means understood. The one clear point was that her mother would allow her to go to Augusta to school. She should have a chance at "lit'chur and the arts," after all. And, wonderful to relate, it was through Martha Abby Judson the good fortune came. Even Jack admitted that.

Martha Abby evidently understood it also; for, on Wednesday, when Polly drove out of the yard in Judge Hitherfly's two-wheeled chaise, there by the gate stood the dejected form of Martha Abby, with a black, instead of a red rag, round her leg.

"I was bound to help you, somehow. *Cluck, cluck, cr-aw!*" croaked she.



## A LITTLE TEXAS NURSE- GIRL.

I AIN'T done nuthin' dis blessed day! no, *dat* I ain't; nuthin' 'tall but trot my legs off waitin' on de white folks, an' I'm goin' to stop it! I done tole Phebe p'intedly I ain' goin' to put up wid it, an' *I aint!* Miss Pattie she come a hour or so 'fo' day, en' she *histed* me ouden my bed wid her stories: "Git up, Chatty, it's sunrise an' de chillen goin' atter sweet-gum, an' baby's callin' you!" So I git up en' dress myself. Miss Pattie, she so airy, she bluched to have *shoes* on *her* nuss. I hauled 'em off soon's I got to de gum-grobe. Bless dat baby! he de smotheres' an' de putties' thing in Texas, wid his blue eye an' his little red curls; an' when dat *flantin' fidgit*, Jewly Ann, cum down dere wid Mis' Rogers' gal-baby wid de black eyes, an' Inpinny black hyar,



## A LITTLE TEXAS NURSE-GIRL.

an' said her toes was puttier 'an Alfred's whole body, I jis kotch my sun-bonnet offen de tree, wha' I hung it ouden de way while we went over to t'other grove, an' I war it out 'on her! de splits was made ob white pine too, caus' Mas' Henry he laugh when Miss Pattie was makin' dem of pasebode, an' he say *he'll* make sumthin' Chatty won't war out. So when Miss Pattie saw it all *tode* up, she ax me how it *werd*, an' I tole her I went in de thicket fur dem *jew*-berries I brung her; an' Mas' Henry, he say, "I spec some little nigger could tell it differum."

Jus' den Mis' Rogers she kum in her fine cayadge wid her silks and her satins, an' I knowed what's de matter, kase she say, "No, I will not kum in; ax her to step to de do';" an' I peeped ouden de parlor winder, an' see dat Jewly Ann settin' in de cayadge cryin', wid her coat all *tore*, an' de strings offen her *apon*, an' de wool stan'in' up in little patches all ober her head, jus' like I lef' her at de grobe, '*ceptin'* she had *whelps* all over her face, an' one o' her eyes would bin plenty for two com'on niggas. I wus mighty sorry fur her, an' me too, when I hear Miss Pattie say, "I'm *very* sorry Mrs. Rogers — I will see



it don't happen agin." An' den she kum out an' say, "Kum here, Chatty! A pretty name for such a girl as you are — go to your mother, and tell her to give you a whipping, an' I'll 'splain it when I see her."

Now my mammy she a quare ole ooman. De white folks likes her, an' say she ole-fashion, and I speck dat's what's de matter. She jus' tuk me, soon's I tell her, an' bun me up wid her strap, an' den she ax me what I bin doin'. I tole her 'bout dat impident Jewly Ann, an' she say, "Well, you wus right — dem po' white folks to set up an' say dey chillen putty es our'n, when our'n is owned hundreds of niggers way back to dey *fo*-fathers, and Mis' Rogers wus a school-teacher an' teached fur her livin,' 'fo' she married Mas' Vic Rogers. But den, Miss Pattie she knows, an' I kin tell you, 's I ben sayin' all along, de niggers de white folks didn't raise ain' fitten to kill even. You go on! An' tell Miss Pattie if you cuts up any more *didoes* to keep you home from 'Mancipation."

Ginger-cakes! ain't I *glad* I got dat whippin'? I clean forgot it, an' I al'ays 'lows to behave my very jimmiest 'bout 'Manspation time, kase Miss Pattie she got a foolish way of sayin', "I won't whip any



## A LITTLE TEXAS NURSE-GIRL.

chile, so you can jus' stay home, Chatty, till you learn to behave." An' oncet when I put de chillen's book in de flour bayal, an' hid 'em so dey could go wid me an' de baby winter-grapein' Sat'day evenin' 'stid o' studyin' dey Sun'-school lesson, an' Phebe foun' dem when she went to make biscuits for supper, Miss Pattie she keep me home from de Baptises festbul wha' me an' all de res' de Meth'dis' gals was gwine to make fun o' dem po' stuck-up, web-footed critters wha wades water like a crane.

Don't care! I ain't goin' to dredge like I is to-day, not if my great-gran'chil'n is *burned* stayin' home! I went up to de big house just smilin' as baskit o' chips from mammy's, kase dat Cicely Ann wha make de chil'n's close, she always settin' in Miss Pattie's room gigglin' an' 'lowin' *she* didn' use to ketch it from her mam-*ma*. Dat gal fear spile up from bein' wid white folks. Den I took de baby an' de big quilt down to de big live-oak tree in de front yard and played tea-party wid some cake an' milk, an' him an' me went to sleep, an' when we woke it wuz dinner-time, an' I fed him at de side-table an' eat my dinner wid him. Den I fil't de big bathin'-tub





UNDER THE LIVE-OAK.







## A LITTLE TEXAS NURSE-GIRL.

wha stan' under de fig-tree by de back do', all shady like little house, an' can't see it frum de road, an' me an' de two littles ones, we bathed ourselves. Den I tuk de baby in his waggin, an' went jew-berryin'. I *heerd* da Cicely Ann tell Miss Pattie I jus' wanted de waggin to cay'e my buckit in ; so's I jus' brung back a big grasshopper an' put him in her sewin' musheen *draw*, an' tole her Miss Pattie sed *gimme* some thread outen it, an' oh gravy ! how she did holler ! After dat I went wid de chillen to de cow-pen, wha' Phebe milkin', an' we all tuk our tin cups an' drinked some new milk kase Dr. Blake he say de baby mus' drink it warm, an' *I* duz what *he* duz — bless him !

Him an' me had supper when we kum to de house, an' I put him to sleep in de hammuck. I was tired clean out den, but Miss Fannie she ax me to make up de bed in de spare-room nice for her *bo* dat jus' kum frum New Orleans. I fix it all nice as pie, an' it look so good I tumble down on it, an nex' *I* know Mr. Hewett an' Mas' Henry stan'in' dar laughin' deyself to death, an' sayin', "Come, Char-ity, we won't tell on you dis time ; but please git up, an' hurry to your own department." He right good if he



A LITTLE TEXAS NURSE-GIRL.

does want Miss Fannie, an' always look like he got a new *gethrin'*-string in his mouf. It wuz so funny, I tole Cicely Ann when I got in bed, an' to-morrer it'll be *hoorahed* all ober dis place. An' de plain truth ob it is I'm *done* workin' like I *is* ben doin', an' I'm goin' to quit it! I don't keer fur de turn-out nohow, 'ceptin' de water-millions — an' de candy — an' de ice-cream — an' seein' aunt Rachel dere, wid her ugly self makin' eyes at us gals; an' oncet she ax me why didn't I kum see Alice, an' I tole her it makes me *nervous* to walk so far, an' how she take on 'bout de chill'n now-days. Aunt Margrit she good to us gals, an' I likes to hear her tell 'bout de white ladies where she go an' stay, an' help 'em wid dey chil'n an' fruit-cake an' mince pies; an' she say, "Be smart, chil'n, an' even Mrs. Allen, de grandest lady in all Texas, will even let you help, wid dat little jewel ob hers, her little granchile, Peirce, if you behave an' work." But I ain't goin' to kill *myself wukkin'*, as I *is* bin doin', an' dat's de wood wid de bark on it. An' I'm goin' to sleep right now an' sleep all day to-morrer to begin wid — don't de baby wants me in de mornin'!



## A NANTUCKET STORY.

C OUSIN ELIZABETH DICK was her name — not Miss Dick, not Elizabeth Dick, not Miss Elizabeth Dick. Her autograph, if solicited to-day, would in all probability be given, "C. Elizabeth Dick;" her silver, if she had ever possessed it, would not be recognized as family plate except bearing the initials, "C. E. D."

Cousin Elizabeth Dick was poor and old, yet she totally ignored poverty, and appeared twenty years her own junior. She occupied the front room of a "Friends' Preparative Meeting Boarding-house." It was furnished to her and for her by this religious society of which she was a member. She considered it a birthright perquisite, therefore felt under no obligation to any one. In this room she kept a school, in her front window a shop.



## A NANTUCKET STORY.

Of a more learned woman the Island of Nantucket could not boast. The style of her conversation, not to use the unpleasant term "stilted," was quite "lofty." No one objected to her long words. She breathed in polysyllables. From "A B A" to "Z E U and Appendix" of the Encyclopædia she could quote without a pause, if a listener could be found.

Her shop, wholly in the front window, seemed to be invariable as a quantity. It ran as follows: First, slate pencils; these, being few in number, met in the interior base of a glass tumbler, and flared at the brim. This vessel was labelled very neatly and distinctly, "Ciphering Implements, one cent apiece; bunktowns taken." Next, suspended from the middle of the window, hung a thin muslin bag containing yellow lumps marked "The Busy Bee." A third collection was of material for polishing brass; the jar holding this was distinguished by the words, "Putrefied Petrification." No one wondered at the labels, few read them; all knew beeswax and rotten stone by sight. Nor did Cousin Elizabeth Dick pretend to misunderstand her customers if, in their simplicity, they inquired for these articles by the



common name of slate-pencils and the like. She respected the lowly, which class comprised all those persons who had not perused thoroughly Johnson's Dictionary and Murray's Grammar. To one of these humble individuals, from whom she received many of the necessaries of life, she remarked, "The charity that I dispense is worthier than thine, for I give the choicest mental food to rich and poor alike, irrespective of person."

Cousin Elizabeth Dick's school did not interfere with her shop; the two never clashed. Her pupils were of both sexes, of all ages, of all sizes; each paying seventeen cents a week in summer and twenty cents a week in winter. The difference in price was supposed to pay the bill for fuel, which was not, as might at first appear, very difficult of performance, the wood being donated by her patrons.

Cousin Elizabeth Dick was a safe teacher: she held her pupils well in check. The tallest scholar was Gilbert Starbuck, the object of my story. Gilbert had a habit of looking down upon us young children in a way I despise, his contempt being much enhanced by the fact that he spelled from the same



book, the same page, the same column and in the same class.

"Surfeit" was the trouble. "Ph-th-is-ic" was accomplished by Jared Coleman; "Phleg-mat-ic" by one of the girls; which brought "Sur-feit" to Gilbert. He thought, as Mary Ann had been absent a week, that she would not be there that day, and the second word would certainly be his; so he crammed upon "Phleg-mat-ic," and lo! a new one and a strange one came to him. Not one person in a thousand can spell "Sur-feit" aright by intuition, so Gilbert failed. Cousin Elizabeth Dick pronounced the same "an ignominious, inglorious failure."

The lad was to be punished; he was to sit by the most minute girl in school. Consequently, he took his seat, as directed, next to me. If there was any little girl whom the boy considered infinitely beneath him, it was the writer of this paper. In speaking *of* me or *to* me (he seldom committed himself in either direction), his appellation, though my father was committee-man, was invariably, "Carrot-locks."

As Gilbert sat down, he turned his back to me. He was all right; any boy on the island would have



behaved the same to any girl under similar circumstances.

After a few moments I touched his shoulder. When he turned around, which he would not have done on second thought, he beheld me with my right eye shut tight and my left one wildly glaring at him.

“What you looking at?” said he.

“You!” I replied.

“Look away!”

“Can’t!”

“Why not?”

Not daring to tell a falsehood, I said, “Well, I don’t think, and don’t know why anybody else should, that I ever in this world got a pin into my eye; but if it is true, that is the reason! Every forenoon, when the clock strikes ten, one eye will close and the other will stare.”

He was to sit by me one week. The second day, at five minutes of ten, “Carrot-locks,” he muttered, “what you study so hard for! awful easy lesson! if you can’t get that, you ought to go into a class of babies!”



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"Hurrying to get through before the hour," I whispered.

As the clock struck, encouraged by his credulity, quick my right eyelids met, and suddenly my left orb, jerking round, fixed an unnatural glare upon the youth. This distortion I kept up as long as I could keep a sober countenance, which was a provokingly short time; then, feigning a sigh, I resumed my study. I did enjoy my game. I had always feared this great muscular frame. Now I had him in my power.

After a few days of untiring effort on my part to follow up this optical deception, Gilbert spoke of me as "Nancy," picked up my book when it fell, and it was possessed to fall very often, offered to assist me in subtraction, and patronized me generally.

Saturday of the week, I was to leave Cousin Elizabeth Dick's school for another. I was so happy at the prospect of a change that I waxed bolder and bolder. When the day arrived, I gave Gilbert a double portion, commencing precisely at ten, but continuing full five minutes by my own counting, probably not more than a quarter of that time in reality.



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“Locks — Nancy, I mean — you grow worse and worse,” said he pathetically.

“Are you a goose?” I snapped back, for I hated pathos; “don’t you know the clocks are not alike on a cold day? My eye doesn’t mind any particular one; the town clock is real slow this morning! every clock now says ‘after ten,’ so my eye is all right again!”

I left school, trusting never to see, never to hear, of Gilbert Starbuck again. I was disappointed. On my way to the new school with my brother, I met Abby Starbuck, Gilbert’s sister. She accosted my elder, to my great disgust, speaking very loud, in this wise :

“Dreadful about Nancy’s eyes! — that pin that she got in them which gives her winks and blinks!”

My brother, being very near-sighted and very weak-sighted, was very sensitive to any allusion of the kind. Knowing me to be sound in this sense, he indignantly replied, “Nothing ails Nancy’s eyes.”

Abby, being quicker and keener than Gilbert, evidently saw through the matter; and raising her tone two octaves, shouted, “Why Nan-cy! I don’t know what *will* become of you!”



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My brother, not perceiving my blushes, drew me rapidly along, but turned back with one more fling at our assailant in these words :

“ She’ll become ten times a better woman than you, and will know more than you and Gil together ! ”

The latter not seeming improbable, I thought the former not impossible, and dismissed the whole affair from my mind.

Gilbert’s father, who had been a successful whaling captain, had relinquished the seas, and with his family removed to the then Far West. I had forgotten that such persons ever lived in our town, not even reverting to Cousin Elizabeth Dick under whose guidance were the earliest and least pleasant experiences of my very happy school-days.

Many years from that date, travelling with my husband and daughter through the West, we happened to spend a Sunday in one of the larger cities of the Buckeye State. Hearing the announcement that a Rev. Mr. Starbuck would officiate in one of the churches there, our curiosity, his name being so purely Nantucket, decided us to attend that place of worship.



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The face of the minister was entirely unknown to us, as we expected. In the course of the sermon, which was a profound production and beautifully delivered, a nautical figure attracted my attention; also an allusion to life on the seashore. Being interested in our local genealogy, my thoughts during the singing were busily engaged with dates, families, &c. I had almost determined to which branch the gentleman might possibly belong when, involuntarily, the names of Abby and James and Gilbert presented themselves. I was in a brown study; so much so, that after the rest of the congregation, with whom I had mechanically risen, had resumed their seats, I remained standing, till a twitching at my dress by a mortified juvenile led me to perceive, to my own amusement, my conspicuous position. As I sat down, I caught the look of Gilbert Starbuck in the clergyman.

The old school-room flashed upon me. The dinner-pails on the mantelpiece, Cousin Elizabeth Dick in her high-backed chair, the farce that I practised upon the lad that sat beside me — all appeared before me.



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Could that heavy, dull boy have made this intelligent, high-toned man? and could Gilbert be so few years my senior? It must be so, and I would prove it.

At the close of the services, as the reverend gentleman descended from the pulpit, leaving my companions in a maze, I proceeded to meet the minister. Reaching out my hand, I said, with a querying, rising inflection, "Mr. Starbuck, Carrotlocks?"

His look of surprise and perplexity, his apparent utter ignorance of me or mine, together with my great presumption in approaching him, had well-nigh taken my breath away; but suddenly, his whole countenance lighting up, right there in the church, laughing hard, he threw his head back with:

"Is it after ten by *all* of them?"



## CHRISTYANN.

ONE pleasant summer noon of the year eighteen hundred and fifty-nine, Christyann Smith stepped from her mother's gate, as sweet and cosey and freckled a little girl as any on the 'pike. She had on her best clothes, even to her Congress gaiters, and carried her mother's flowered and lined silk parasol over her white little shaker bonnet trimmed with blue *barége* and ribbon. Her embroidered skirt showed its points below her muslin dress; people did "hand embroidery" in those days, and the rich needlework was considered worth showing. Christyann's hair was cut short around her ears. When the sun got a chance it shone through her shaker bonnet in flecks, on a snub nose and soft pretty cheeks.

The 'pike was Hebron's great thoroughfare. It was one of the arteries of travel before railroads



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were so numerous. It extended like a white, broad flint band up grade and down, across culvert and bridge, more important in appearance than any railway now is. The staging days were over, but Hebron kept up intercourse with the world by means of hacks running east and west on the 'pike.

Christyann followed the 'pike as far as she could every day in going to school. On the 'pike she always walked straight, with one arm hanging by her side and the other folded across her stomach, unless she had a dinner-basket or parasol to carry; whereas, if she took the short cut through dog-fennel across the common, she was sure to skip and run. On this occasion nothing could have induced her to cross the common, though it was three times as far around.

Out of a broad white house with green window-shades came another little girl; and down the ornamental steps of a house with an iron knocker, still another, until squads and pairs of white or bright dresses all along the 'pike, contrasted with the plainer Sunday suits of little boys.

Christyann fell in with Gusty Lyle, and then with



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Edith Gage, and then with a prim, long-nosed little girl who looked like a duck, and was oddly named Alcinda Young. And each little girl carried herself with a consciousness of being dressed up for an important occasion.

"Don't you wish it was time to go to the panorama now?" said Gusty Lyle, all in a quiver: she had a pink face and yellow hair, and was always tiptoeing. Her mother dressed her in gauzy things, and the boys gave her candy at school. "I got my fi' cents here. Where's yours?"

Christyann unclosed her soft, freckled fist and showed the precious coin in its moist nest. There were no nickels in those days. It was a thin bit of silver dated 1853. Edith and Alcinda showed similar keys to the panorama, one in the depths of a muslin pocket, the other tied safely in a handkerchief corner.

"I didn't know whether your mother'd give you money to go," said Alcinda, smiling aside at the bearer of the flowered parasol. She did not mean to allude to the fact that Chris' mother was a widow with nothing but a homestead, obliged to take a



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boarder or two. But Christyann responded with some sharpness :

"I guess she *would* give me money to go ! And if she didn't, Mr. Morgan would, anyhow."

"I think he's the *nicest* old gentleman," murmured Edith Gage, whose very sweet face attracted the nice side of everybody. Edie had on an old-fashioned spencer waist, and a very short dress showed a hole in her stocking. But she was very happy and placid.

"He's always givin' you things, ain't he, Chris !" fluttered Gusty. "Oh, I wish he boarded at my house !"

"Is the Secondary goin' to the panorama ?"

"No. Just the Primary's goin' to march," announced Chris. "I guess there's *some* goin' from the Secondary. But they ain't goin' with *us*."

"It's most two hours till three o'clock !"

"I wish they'd have it right away."

"So do I. How does a panorammer look ?"

"Oh, it's pictures — the nicest pictures in the world ! Mr. Morgan has seen 'em. And they move along like — clouds or someth'n."

"O—h !"



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“And it’s awful big.”

“There’s Streets’ young ones. *They* won’t get to go.”

The girls’ gaiters were now patting irregularly off the ‘pike upon the only paved corner Hebron owned. Two dirty children, with touching faces, were patting barefoot in the same direction. The girls looked at them with contempt. It was the fashion in Hebron. They were public nuisances, employed by their lazy parents to beg a living off neighbors and thriftier people, under the name of borrowing. It was sometimes remarked that the children were pretty and not ill-behaved, and it was a pity they should be brought up so. Still, they were coming up so.

“You going to the panorama, Kate Streets?” called Gusty with airy insolence. Kate was used to being put upon. When the boys teased her on the playground, she sidled away as quietly as she could, and resented nothing but an injury to Annie.

“No, I gueth not,” she replied in her patient lisp.

“You don’t want to go, do you?”

“*I* want to go!” said Annie with a pucker. Annie had large cinnamon-colored eyes, and a positive, un-



lipping tongue. She was about five years old. One of her nankeen pantalettes was split wide open and flapped like a curtain behind her heel.

"They wouldn't let such a sight as you in," sneered Alcinda Young, who would not have hurt a lame chicken; but the Streets children were of less account than lame chickens. "Go home and get your mother to sew up your panty."

"Sheth bithzy," apologized Kate.

"We're going to the panorammer at the church, and so's all the scholars in the Primary — 'cept you."

"I know that," said Kate.

"Won't your father give you money to go?"

"He hathn't got any."

"Did you ask him?"

"Yeth, I ath'd him to give Annie five thenth to go."

"I want to go to the panorammer!" burst out Annie, more decidedly than before.

"Honey," said Kate, hugging the black-ringed head to her belt-line when the well-dressed girls had passed, "Katie hathn't got no five thenth to take Annie in the panorammer. But we'll make the prettieth play-houth —"



“I want to go to the panorammer,” wailed Annie.  
 “I *want* to!”

“Yeth, I know you do, honey.” Kate smeared a tear down her cheek, leaving a flare of dirt. “But Katie can’t git five thenth for you. Put your arm round me and I’ll put my arm round you, and we’ll hippity-hop to the barber’t h thop to buy a thtick of candy!”

The teacher did not follow her regular programme for the afternoon. A holiday spirit prevailed. There was a great deal of marching and singing and chorus recitation. They sang “One finger, one thumb,” and “The Menagerie,” and

“What is this that shines on me,  
 So high up in the sky I see ;  
 That shines so bright and loving still  
 Upon the little running rill,  
     Which turns the wheel  
 Of yonder mill ?  
     It is, oh, ’tis the moo—oon,  
 That turns the wheel  
 Of yonder mill ;  
     It is, oh, ’tis the moon !”

The baby-class in which Annie Streets was num-



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bered, rendered a glee of its own, with appropriate pantomime :

“ Do you cry when you’re washed,  
And not love to be clean,  
And go to school dirty,  
Not fit to be seen ?

“ Oh, look at your fingers,  
You see it is so !  
Did you ever behold  
Such a dirty black row !

“ Oh dear ! I must try  
To look very neat,  
So the ladies will love me :  
— And I’ll now take my seat ! ”

The spirit of reform never took hold upon Annie, however. When her fingers had duly displayed themselves—the only dirty black ones in the row—and she had now taken her seat, she doubled them into fists and resumed sponging her eyes with them. The teacher knew she was crying to go to the panorama. It was too bad. But if people kept that Streets family, and gave them all the amusements that came along into the bargain, there was no telling what they would expect next. Besides, the teacher



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was taking in several pupils, very nice country children whose parents could not pay for panoramas; and she must draw a line somewhere.

The recess bell rang.

That was the great signal for departure. The country children scampered for their dinner-pails. The young caravan fell into line, two and two.

Shouts rang on the play-ground. High-school girls, sedately walking and talking with their arms around each other, stopped to see the Primary flock file away in the direction of the brick church. One of the boys paused with a ball he had just caught in "Antony Over," to give the infants a cheer, and was almost caught by the opposite party skurrying suddenly around the end of the house after him.

Christyann marched with Gusty Lyle. How delightful it was to be going to a panorama! And it was such a pretty day! She hugged the five cents in her moist palm; and Annie Streets was making the air resound with her cries.

"Poor little thing!" said Christyann. It was so out of the fashion—out of the world—not to be going to the panorama.



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“Why don’t Kate take her home?” said Gusty.  
“She just bawls along after us!”

“Annie,” whispered Kate, tearfully, in an ear which was deaf to counsel, “come home, honey. Katie’ll put a teeter in the fenth, and oh, we’ll teeter tho nithe!”

But Annie strained after the panorama. Why could all those children go in while she must stay out!

“I want to see the panorammer,” she argued with Kate, “I *want* to, Katie, I want to *so* bad — oh! — oh! — take me in, Katie, I want to go! I want to go!”

“If I only had five thenth,” panted Kate under her patient breath, “if I only had it! Onthe I had five thenth, and thpent it for Chrithmath. Why didn’t I keep it to take Annie to the panorama? Oh, how can I thtand it!”

“I guess I’ll go back and see if I can’t get Annie Streets to stop cryin’,” said Christyann.

“Who’ll march with me?” objected Gusty.

Christyann went back. Annie and Kate were standing by a fence while this good company passed





"HERE'S MY FIVE CENTS," SAID CHRISTY ANN.







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in review before them. Christyann was conscious of some shame in parleying with them. She felt it was an unpopular movement.

"The wantn to go," said Kate piteously.

"Here's my five cents," said Christyann. "Come on, Annie. I'll pay it to the man at the door and you can go in."

"But what'll you do?"

"I won't go in." Christyann turned her plump speckled face sideways. "I couldn't stand it to go in, Kate, and hear her cryin' for it outside!"

That was exactly Kate's view of the subject; she did not see how anybody could stand it. Still, a dumb gratitude came into her eyes, creating such an expression as you may see in the eyes of a cow when her calf is lifted out of the butcher's cart, and as she supposes to liberty.

"Come on, honey. Chrithtyann Thmith ith goin' to take you in."

Chris marched up her two bunches of tatters. She knew the Streets always *expected* folks to do things for them, and this blunts the edge of kindness. But her heart did yearn over Annie.



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“Well, Christyann Smith!” exclaimed Gusty, looking back from the church steps.

“I don’t care!” retorted Christyann, aggressively. “Now, Annie,” turning her attention to the cinnamon-eyed child, “you just go right inside and sit down. Kate, you better wait outside for her, here on the steps.”

“Yeth,” said Kate in beatitude.

The last bright dress and brass-buttoned jacket were swallowed by the church door. Christyann and Kate had a swift vision of some large apparatus at the end of the church; the 1853 half-dime went into the doorkeeper’s hands, and he pushed Annie gently before him to a good seat in that little heaven.

Chris turned away under the flowered parasol. She ached, but felt sure she would have ached worse if Annie had been left crying outside. No panorama had ever come to Hebron, before: it was probably the chance of a lifetime.

“I don’t care, I couldn’t help it!” said Chris, staunching some crystal drops on her cheeks. Her back was turned to Kate, who huddled patiently down on the stone steps. “Why, say!” exclaimed



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the doorkeeper looking out and around, "are there only two of you out here? You two might as well come in."

Chris used her handkerchief industriously before she turned to the doorkeeper.

"I haven't got any more money."

"Well, never mind that. Come right in. 'Twon't make any difference for just a couple of you."

"And I got in for just *nothin'*!" exclaimed Christyann to Mr. Morgan when she went to tell him tea was ready. "And so did Kate. And oh, it was *so* pretty! John the Baptist's head on a dish, and the girl wore a blue dress, and there was cities, and mountains, and people riding on donkeys, and the man told what everything was, and the temple—and Annie Streets, you'd thought she was crazy!"

"And what if you hadn't got in?" said Mr. Morgan, as he started with the little girl out of the store. Christyann stopped skipping, and looked up at his world-marked face.

"Why, then I'd stayed out. But Annie Streets, seh'd a seen it, anyhow."



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“You’d have had the reward of an approving conscience?” suggested Mr. Morgan, quizzically.

Christyann puckered the freckles on her nose and forehead. “I don’t know.”

“Well,” said Mr. Morgan, “I’ve been thinking of chartering a canal-boat, and taking a load of you little fellows to the Reservoir some Saturday. And as you came so *very* near missing the panorama, don’t you think your mother would let you go next Saturday?”

The rapture suggested by this proposition would require to be set forth in another whole chapter of the Experiences of Christyann.



## DID ETHEL SEE THE QUEEN?

ETHEL will always insist, not only that she saw the queen, but that the queen spoke to her. Her father smiles whenever she tells the story, and her brother Jack, who is three years older than Ethel and of course a great deal wiser, openly laughs at the idea. "As if Queen Victoria would speak to our Ethel!" he is accustomed to remark, "even if Ethel did see her, which is quite unlikely." But Ethel, nevertheless, holds stoutly to her belief, and continues to tell the story to any one who wants to hear it and who is not too openly a sceptic.

They were all in England, as it happened, last summer, and for one of their excursions went to Windsor Castle. The queen, they were told, was away, so



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that they might go through the state apartments, which one may not do when her majesty is at home. The bookseller, however, who furnished them with tickets was not sure but that she might come back that afternoon; so they went directly to the door of admission, lest by leaving it till after they had seen the other sights they might be barred out. The attendant, who did not seem to know anything about the queen's expected return, received them politely, and leading the way up-stairs proceeded to show them through the long series of elegant rooms. It was in one of the largest and stateliest of them that Ethel found herself separated from her father and mother and Jack. She had been looking at a picture of the family of George III., and did not notice out of which door the party had gone. In her uncertainty, she chose the one opposite to that which they had taken, and leading, though she did not know it, in the direction of the queen's private apartments. She had not gone far before she felt sure that she was wrong; but Ethel was a brave little girl, and pushed on, thinking that in some of the great rooms or wide corridors through which she passed she must find



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some one who would show her the way out.

Finally, in one of the rooms she heard voices through a half-open door. Could it be her own party, she wondered ; or was it some of the attendants ? At any rate, she would find out. Ethel pushed open the door, closing it carefully behind her, as she had been taught to do, and stood in the room. It was a smaller apartment than any she had been in, and furnished, she thought, more like their own parlor in New York. In it were two ladies, one young and quite pretty, standing near the table in the middle of the room ; the other, seated by the window that looked out towards Windsor forest, an older person with a kindly, motherly face. She must be somebody of consequence, the little girl thought, because she wore such beautiful diamond ear-rings and pin. But then, Ethel was quite accustomed to diamond ear-rings, and did not have any fears of the lady on that account. Indeed, she walked over to where the lady was seated, and bowed in the most polite way.

“ If you please,” she said, “ I’m lost.”

Both the ladies surveyed her with a surprised look,



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and the younger, walking to the side of the room, laid her hand on the bell-pull.

“So you are lost, are you?” said the elder lady, motioning at the same time to the other not to ring the bell.

Ethel nodded cordially.

“Yes,” she said; “I don’t know how it happened, but we were all in one of the rooms, and then I looked around, and I was all alone.”

The lady frowned.

“Visitors to-day!” she exclaimed.

“Oh, it’s all right,” Ethel hastened to say; “the queen isn’t here, you know. She may be this afternoon, though. I wish I could see the queen,” she added meditatively.

The frown departed from the lady’s face, and left in its place a bright, sweet smile. The younger person had already sat down, and was listening attentively to the conversation.

“Well, my dear,” said the former, “what would you do if you should see the queen?”

Ethel was a romantic little girl, and her cheeks flushed with excitement.



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"Oh," she said, "I would tell her how perfectly lovely it was, when she was a little girl, and did not know she was going to be queen, and met her nice young cousin, you know, and married him —— Do you know the queen?" she asked impulsively, breaking off her sentence.

The lady's eyes were full of tears, and leaning forward she drew the little girl to her side and kissed her.

"My daughter knows the queen," she said; "but how does it happen that you know so much about her? You are not a little English girl, are you?"

Ethel drew herself up quite proudly, as she always did whenever the subject of nationality was mentioned.

"Oh my, no!" she exclaimed. "I'm a little American girl. We live in New York when I'm at home, and I read Mrs. Oliphant's story, the one that was in Harper's, you know. I wonder if the queen read that?" she added inquiringly, turning to the stately young lady, of whom, to tell the truth, Ethel was still a little afraid.

But the young lady laughed.

"Why, I read it to her myself!" she said.



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Ethel's face lighted up with eager interest.

"Did you really?" she asked. "How nice it must be for you to know the queen! Do you have to wait on her like Miss Burney did?"

"Well, no," smilingly; "not altogether."

Ethel's face flushed.

"Why, of course not!" she exclaimed: "Queen Victoria is too good to make anybody wait on her as that horrid old queen made poor Miss Burney. Wasn't it shocking?" she asked sympathetically.

"Very!" assented the young lady.

"I wish I could see the queen," Ethel remarked again, with an emphasis on the wish.

"I will tell you how you may see her," observed the young lady quietly.

Ethel danced up and down. "Oh, that would be just too lovely for anything!" she said; "I'd walk from here to London to see her."

"Oh, you needn't do that! All you will have to do is to go down to the Quadrangle about five o'clock, and stand near the statue of Charles II., and you will see the queen when she goes out to take her drive."

Ethel's face fell.



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"Oh!" she said, "the queen isn't here to-day, and I shall not be here to-morrow."

"But the queen may have come back by this afternoon," said the young lady.

"Do you really think she will?" asked Ethel excitedly; "does your mamma think she will?" turning again to the elderly lady.

"Well," said the latter smilingly, "I think myself she will."

"Oh," said Ethel, "if papa and mamma will only stay! But I forgot all about them," she added; "and mamma will be dreadfully worried about me. Would you mind telling me, please, how I may get out? If you will only tell me, I can find the way myself."

The elder lady motioned with her eyes towards the bell-cord, which the daughter pulled. In a minute another lady entered the room, and having bowed respectfully, stood off at a little distance.

"This lady will show you the way," said Ethel's friend, "and you may kiss me before you go. Lady Jane," addressing the attendant, "take this little girl out through the state apartments, and see that no one else comes in that way."



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Ethel looked up distressfully, and her eyes filled with tears.

“Oh, did I do wrong?” she cried. “I did not mean to be rude; I thought it was all free alike—one room looked just like another.”

The lady kissed the flushed cheeks.

“My dear,” she said tenderly, “you must not blame yourself at all. I am very glad to have seen you. Only I do not want other persons coming in whom I should not be so glad to see. Now you may kiss my daughter, and Lady Jane will show you the way back.”

Ethel did as she was bidden, and was quite surprised with the warmth of the young lady's embrace.

“Good-by!” she said meekly as she stood near the door, which Lady Jane had already opened.

Both ladies smiled cordially.

“Good-by, dear,” they said.

And then the door was shut, and Ethel found herself with her guide on her way back through the big, lonesome state apartments. The lady, though gracious and kindly, had little to say, and Ethel did not feel nearly as much at home with her as with the two



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whom she had left, and who were evidently in some way her superiors. It was not long before they came to the guard-room, and here to her great joy Ethel



ETHEL.

discovered her father and mother and Jack, who had been waiting there on the assurance of the guard that she would certainly re-appear.

"O mamma!" Ethel cried excitedly, "I've had



## DID ETHEL SEE THE QUEEN?

such a perfectly lovely time ; and Lady Jane was kind enough to show me the way back."

Mrs. Revere bowed.

"We are very much indebted to you," she said, addressing Ethel's guide.

"Indeed it was a pleasure to me," said the lady, smiling ; "I hope you have not been alarmed for the little girl. There was no need, she was in good hands."

"One may be sure of that," remarked Mr. Revere politely, "in the palace of the Queen of England."

The lady bowed, and, with one or two more courteous words, Mr. and Mrs. Revere and the children left the apartment and made their way again into the Quadrangle.

"O mamma !" exclaimed Ethel again, when they had got into the open air and out of hearing, "I saw two of the most lovely ladies, and one of them told me that the queen would be home this afternoon, and that if we stood over there by the statue we would be sure to see her when she went out to take her ride. Mightn't we wait, papa, and go back to London by a late train ?"



## DID ETHEL SEE THE QUEEN?

Mr. Revere looked a little uncertain. He had planned to return by the four-o'clock train, so as to get in London for dinner. But he was always willing to gratify his children where it could be reasonably done, and so, after deliberating a moment, wisely gave way.

"Well," he said, "I suppose we might as well wait even if we do not see her. It will be a pleasant afternoon, and we can take a fly and drive through Eton to Stoke Pogis, where Gray wrote the 'Elegy,' you know."

And so they did, first having visited the remaining sights of the castle, and taken a very poor lunch at a very high price at one of the inns of the town. It was nearly five o'clock when the shabby old fly, in which they had made their excursion, drew up before the castle gate through which they entered again into the Quadrangle, and took up their place near the statue.

They did not have long to wait. Promptly on the hour, Ethel's quick ears caught the sound of horses' hoofs. In another moment, through the archway on the right of the Quadrangle darted a beautiful carriage drawn by two milk-white horses, and driven by an



## DID ETHEL SEE THE QUEEN?

imposing coachman in livery, by whose side was seated a tall, ungainly looking man with a Scotch cap.

"That is Brown," said Ethel's father: "John Brown, who used to be Prince Albert's body-servant; now he attends the queen."

The carriage drew up before the door at the further right-hand corner of the Quadrangle, above which were two large bay windows opening, as the guard on top of the tower had told them that morning, into the queen's private apartments. By this time, others had entered the Quadrangle, so that besides Mr. Revere's party there was quite a crowd. Very soon their curiosity was gratified by the sight of some one emerging from the castle door, who opened the door of the carriage and stood by its side.

It was so far off that they could not see either the figures or faces very distinctly, but Ethel's father told her that the queen, if she were there at all, would be the first to enter the carriage; so that when another person came out the door and was seen getting in the barouche, there was no doubt left in Ethel's mind, or for that matter in the minds of anybody else there, that it was the queen. Then another lady's figure



## DID ETHEL SEE THE QUEEN?

was seen to enter and seat herself by the queen's side. Then the carriage door was shut; the man whom Mr. Revere had taken to be Brown mounted the box; the driver whipped up the horses, and down the hard road towards the archway by which it had entered came the royal equipage. As it drew near, Ethel strained her eyes. As it turned to go out of the gate, though it was still a couple of hundred feet away, she gave a little cry of surprised recognition.

"Why, mamma!" she exclaimed, "it is the very lady whom I saw in the room to-day, and the one sitting by her side is the daughter."

One or two persons who were standing near and overheard the remark, looked curiously down at Ethel's eager face. The carriage had now passed out of sight, and Mrs. Revere was not anxious that her little girl should seem to be claiming acquaintance with royalty.

"Never mind, my dear," she said; "you can tell me about it later."

"Yes," said Mr. Revere, "the show is over, and we will have to hurry to catch our train. You can tell us about it in the cars, Ethel, only I don't



## DID ETHEL SEE THE QUEEN?

imagine you could recognize anybody so far off."

And that always remained Mr. Revere's opinion. Neither he nor Jack could ever be brought to believe that the little girl had actually seen the queen. But Mrs. Revere, I am glad to say, clings as firmly to the story as Ethel herself; and so long as her mother believes it, Ethel is satisfied.

Ethel's principal anxiety is lest she should have been rude.

"Mamma," she said one night when Mrs. Revere was putting her to bed, "what relation was the old queen whom Miss Burney waited on to Queen Victoria?"

"Why, her grandmother, I believe," said Ethel's mother.

Ethel drew a long breath.

"And just to think, mamma," she said, "I spoke of her as a horrid old thing. What do you suppose the queen must have thought?"



## BEELY COOLY HORTENSUS AND IBBY HENEREEA.

**B**EELY COOLY HORTENSUS the good cat, and Ibbby Henereéa the favorite hen of the family, climbed to their usual perch on the sloping board which connected eaves and rain-water barrel. Here they could look over the window-curtain at the family — like two guardian angels.

The outdoor starlight scarcely revealed Beely Cooly Hortensus' tiger-striped coat, but the fireshine coming over the curtain made his eyes like opals, and even threw a mild domestic radiance into the yellow gazers of Ibbby Henereéa.

The mossy house-roof sloped down quite to the window-top, and the front door opened at the back of the dwelling.

Beside the rain-barrel Miss Hancock, the gosling,



## BEELY COOLY HORTENSUS.

stood stretching her bill upward. Her fuzzy wings were no manner of use yet; every night she paddled around outside the rain-barrel desiring to wobble up that board and sit beside Beely Cooly Hortensus and Ibby Henereéa.

They felt themselves above her, and watched the houseshine with placid feelings.

"Our family have all drawn up to the fire and sat down to purr," said Beely Cooly Hortensus, half-closing his eyes and burring in his own throat.

"Except the Housefather," said Ibby Henereéa, settling and taking a good hold on the board. She sat below her companion nearer the rain-barrel. "He must scratch a long way off, for he hasn't been home to roost all the time since the Little Housemother took her verbenas in from the cold. The brier hedge is still around the mounds, though I feel no desire to make nests there now. I don't believe the Little Housemother would have thanked me for an egg among her verbenas."

"See all those apples set to roast along the hearth," said Beely Cooly Hortensus.

Miss Hancock stretched her neck up until it





MARY MAREEA MARIA; ALSO MISS HANCOCK, B. C AND I. H.







seemed about to snap, and tried to poise on the toes of her webs; but all this effort barely reached the second hoop of the rain-barrel. She sat down on her heels and snipped at some dry grass. Sometime Miss Hancock meant to hide in the house over night, and see all those great doings. She had been trod on, and she had been shut in the door. It would be a hissing shame if she did not finally succeed.

"Now the Old Housemother has taken out her knitting," said Beely Cooly Hortensus. "So the fun will begin. The Younkers draw up to the fire."

"You have often sat by the fire, haven't you?" remarked Ibbby Henereéa.

"Oh, yes," replied her striped friend in a superior, indifferent way. "When the snow stood to the fence-tops and creaked under a man's heel, I have lain on that hearth all night long, and felt the heat penetrate my coat to my very heart."

"It would be a lovely place for hatching," meditated Ibbby Henereéa. "I would roll my eggs into those rose-colored coals, where I have no doubt they would soon be done. It makes me smile to think



## BEELY COOLY HORTENSUS

of the chicks stepping out daintily into such color!"

Ibby Henereéa smiled.

"It would give them ægsthetic views of life," she added.

But Miss Hancock slapped her paddles in the mud, where the barrel leaked. She felt quite galloped over by such large words.

"They don't seem to know in there," said Beely Cooly Hortensus, "that the wind off the prairie is cutting, and roars like many hives of bees, and an ice-crust is formed over Caney Fork Slew."

"What a family ours is to laugh!" exclaimed Ibby Henereéa. "They get fun out of nothing. I believe they could even find something amusing in me."

"They do caterwaul a great deal," said Beely Cooly Hortensus. "But what I find most interesting in them is their fancy for queer names and sounds. It may not be improving, but," Beely Cooly Hortensus hesitated, and drew his whiskers through his teeth, "it tickles a cat's ear. Our White Younger is a marvellous big-headed boy for seven years. Watch his delicate chin, and the way his eyes spread. That boy is a credit to us."



AND IBBY HENEREEA.

"Far behind the Baby Younker," maintained Ibbv Henereéa. "She is very young to be talking and toddling. I have pondered her sayings as I sat on my eggs. And she sings, 'Oba' dah, oba' dah—I soon be at home oba' dah!' Now what foresight that shows!"

The tinkle of voices around the fireplace absorbed Beely Cooly Hortensus and Ibbv Henereéa.

"Mamma," said the White Younker, twisting on his stool, "I have begged and bay-ged and ba-a-ay-ged you for a story."

The Baby Younker, in her faded calico nightgown, was parading with the bare ribs of an ancient sunshade above her head. "My sarsol," said the Baby Younker, swelling with satisfaction, and smoothing a red woollen comforter tied just under her arms. "I got a srash, too."

"What kind of a story do you want?" inquired the Old Housemother, pulling off so much yarn that the ball rolled across the floor.

"A big one—a three-sonned or three-daughtered one."

"I will tell you a one-sonned and two-daughtered



one," said the Old Housemother. "There were a papa and mamma with three children who came to live on the prairie, and built a small house, with one door at the back, because they expected to raise a fine addition in front as soon as the farm produced good crops. But other things went backward with them, and the addition they got on their property was a mortgage."

"Fiddlesticks on that story!" said the White Younker, turning his eyes from the grand corn cob fire. "There's no fun in that."

"Your observation might be just, my son, if you knew how it was going to turn out. But privately I think there is fun in it. The papa finally took to feeding stock and shipping them to Chicago."

"That's old," scoffed the White Younker. "He's done that lots of times."

"If his last venture proves a good one his fortunes will be entirely turned round; for a house that has no mortgage on it ought to open towards the road. And if that very papa should walk in here to-night, I wouldn't be a bit surprised."

"They forget," wailed Beely Cooly Hortensus at



the ear of Ibbby Henereéa, "the cold open prairie and Caney Fork Slew!"

Ibbby Henereéa muttered sympathetically, "Crah-crah-crah!" and shook her head.

Miss Hancock knew something very interesting was going on, and though the Great Bear and Orion stuck so low out of the sky that every star appeared almost within reach of her bill, she took no notice of this wonderful night effect on the prairie, but would have given the down off her bosom to be up on the board.

"I wanted a fat story with nice names," said the White Younker.

"Sreet Spe'it, hear my pur-rayer,"

sang the Baby Younker.

"One of the characters," said the Little House-mother, "might be called after the southern girl at school — America Belle Georgia Mazeppa Rosydale Possy-cum-attatis Komer. She named herself."

"The Dutch names and diminutives are funny," said the Old Housemother. "Two men in Pennsylvania once made a wager as to which could produce



## BEELY COOLY HORTENSUS

the oddest real name. The man who knew a girl named Tonicky Bouisteel was thought to have won till the other came out with Mockilgee Hornocker."

The White Younker laughed until he shook. He was a slight, ribby kind of boy and easily shaken.

"Oh, yes," pursued the Housemother, "I knew a person myself with a long, singular name. It couldn't be called singular, either, for it was very plural."

At this the Little Housemother laughed knowingly, but the White Younker inquired with a squirm,

"What's plural?"

"Plural means more than one," said the Little Housemother, looking as if she were going to add, "third person, feminine gender."

"Humph!" remarked the White Younker, "then you named your cat and hen plural, didn't you? Go on, mamma."

"I made rhyme with the name in it," said the Old Housemother, pausing and biting her knitting-needle. "If I can recollect it, I'll repeat it for you."

"I can make poetry," volunteered the White Younker. So he spun forth:



AND IBBY HENEREEA.

“When first we came, we were so young  
That we could not move our toe,  
But now we are so strong that we  
Can beat the birds also.”

“It’s been so long the words have nearly gone out  
of my mind,” continued the Old Housemother. “But  
I think they went this way—it was all nonsense:

“In the calico dullness of Indian summer,  
When water the road cover-o’er’d,  
Sat Mary Mareéa Maria Sophia  
Salatády Cockady Ford.”

“O mamma, that wasn’t a real name?”

“Yes, it was.”

“‘I will fish up the horses’ old tracks with my shoe-string,  
And lay ’em all out on a board,’  
Said Mary Mareéa Maria Sophia  
Salatády Cockady Ford.

“The minnows all stood on their tails in a quiver,  
Then out of the water they poured  
At Mary Mareéa Maria Sophia  
Salatády Cockady Ford.



BEELY COOLY HORTENSUS

"They took her by heels and by toes and by apron,  
And dragged her the river-bed toward,  
Poor Mary Mareéa Maria Sophia  
Salatády Cockady Ford."

"Beneath a sweet pad of illuminous lilies  
Whose leather stems burrowed and bored,  
Lies Mary Mareéa Maria Sophia  
Salatády Cockady Ford."

"Of all things!" commented the Little House-mother, while her mamma, laughing and somewhat shamefaced, went on with the knitting. The White Younker repeated with gusto:

"Mary Mareéa Maria Sophia  
Salatády Cockady Ford."

"Cocky Ford," shouted the Baby Younker, waving her parasol.

Beely Cooly Hortensus looked at Ibby Henereéa with eyes so immense and distinct that she could not help observing there were tears in them.

"We have a very talented family," he observed.

"Yes, indeed," croodled Ibby Henereéa.

Now Miss Hancock was in such a state that she



tried to walk up the rain-barrel. Immediately afterwards she was under the impression that the sky had fallen, as there was a tradition in her family that it once did on a far-off ancestor named Goosey-poosey. She rolled over and over, until a new sky seemed to be forming of her web feet. But when she could get up and flirt herself and wipe her bill on her wing, she observed that Ibbby Henereéa had barely escaped tumbling in the rain-barrel, and was edging up the board again toward Beely Cooly Hortensus, who stood on his hind feet and pressed his whiskers close to the glass.

"The house *is* standing yet," said Ibbby Henereéa, trembling.

"O, yes," replied Beely Cooly Hortensus with the superior air which became his position and claws. "It was the Housefather shutting the door hard that almost upset the board and barrel."

"Has he come home? Let me see, oh, let me see!"

"Let me see!" mourned Miss Hancock.

"There he is hugging them all," said Beely Cooly Hortensus, "and saying everything has turned out right. I wonder what that long package sticking



## BEELY COOLY HORTENSUS

out of his pocket is?" Beely Cooly Hortensus licked his own chops. "I have seen fish and steaks rolled in brown paper like that. Ptz! It's a doll for the Baby Younker. I suppose his other pockets are stuffed with nonsense for the others."

"It looks more comfortable in there than ever," meditated Ibby Henereéa. And Beely Cooly Hortensus became still more alert.

"They are going to spread the table for him," he explained; "and when that happens I always feel as if I ought to go into the house."

"Do go, by all means," said Ibby Henereéa.

"Yes, I will. And as they are busy I will not ask them to open the door. There is always that broken pane in the pantry window."

Miss Hancock, who had started up to follow, now slunk quite behind the water-barrel, and wished she had remained in the chicken-house where the Little Housemother put her.

"I suppose," said Beely Cooly Hortensus, in the pause before jumping, "that this hind-foremost house will now be altered and many other changes made."

"I suppose so," said Ibby Henereéa.



AND IBBY HENEREEA.

“Well, I hope they’ll always be as happy as they are now. Good-night, Ibbv Henereéa.”

“So do I. Crah—crah. There’s no telling, though. Good-night, Beely Cooly Hortensus.”



## CHINESE DECORATION FOR EASTER EGGS.

**Y**OU should select a good-sized egg, and of a rich dark color. I have found that eggs laid by the Brahma hens are just about the right shade for pleasing effect.

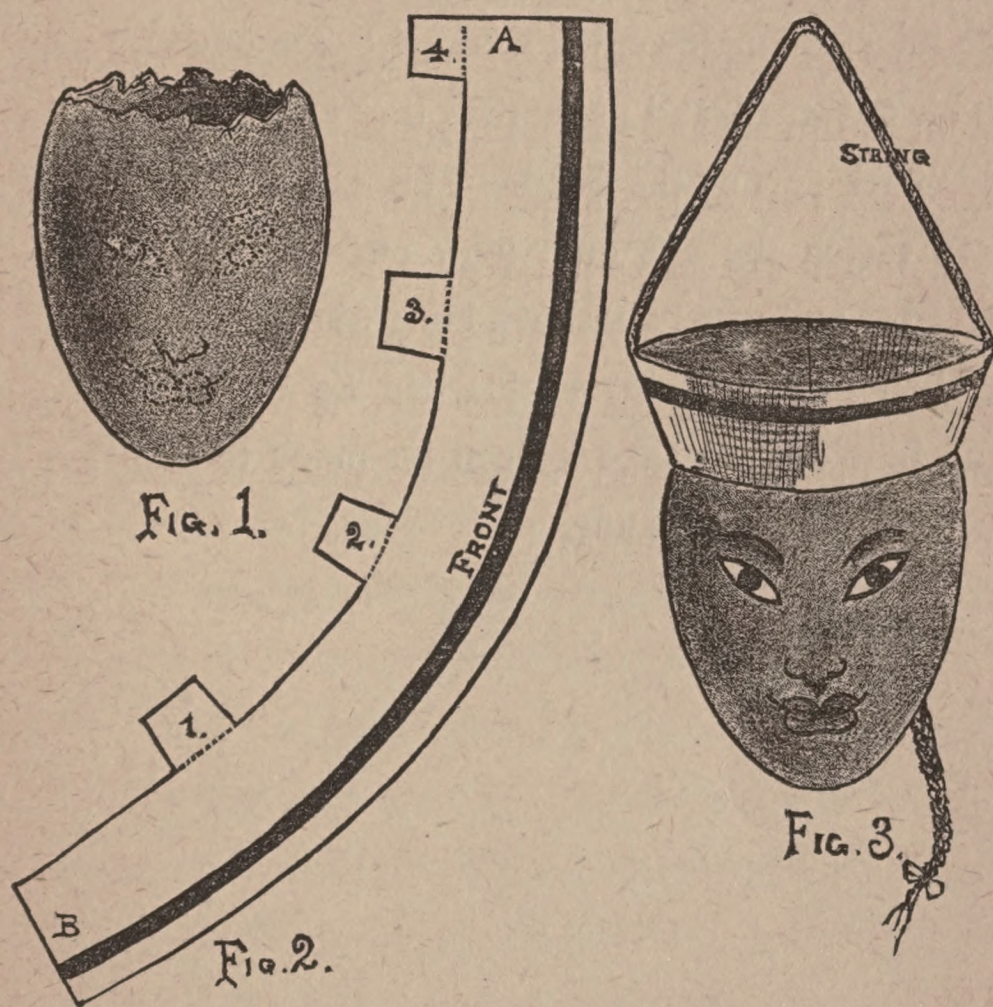
First make an opening in the large end and drop out the contents of the shell. Then with your pencil trace lightly on the shell some features as in fig. 1. Next paint the whites of the eyes with solid white, and the lips a bright vermilion. Then go over your outlines with black paint or India ink, filling the eyeball with black. Use water-color paints.

Now we have a showy-looking Chinaman, but he has no cap on; neither does he sport the national pigtail. To supply the first of these necessary articles, you will cut a piece of bright-colored paper after



# CHINESE DECORATION FOR EASTER EGGS.

the fashion of fig. 2. If you please, you can decorate it with a heavy line of black paint. Its pieces 1, 2, 3 and 4, are to be bent tightly up at the dotted line, so



DIAGRAMS OF DECORATIONS FOR EASTER EGGS.

as to receive a decided crease. Then each one may be touched with stiff paste, slipped within the shell and fastened. Then the strip must be pasted to-



## CHINESE DECORATION FOR EASTER EGGS.

gether at A and B, drawing one end over the other far enough to make the cap fit well.

To make the pigtail, take some black silk twist and make a braid about four inches long, and about as thick as single zephyr worsted. Tie one end with a bit of thread, and paste the other end on the top of the back part of the head. This you will do before you fasten the cap on. Now our Chinaman is finished—and when you have hung him up by a silken ribbon pasted inside of his cap, he will look very much like fig. 3, and he can be made to hold popcorn or any light candy.



## MRS. HUNGERFORD'S SECOND LETTER FROM HOME.

**M**<sup>Y</sup> dear own Mamma:—I am so sorry my other letter worried you. I didn't think it would. After you telegraphed to know if our sicknesses was dangerous, and papa telegraphed back that you musn't be frightened, he scolded me awful for writing you about our measles and things.

I think the telegraph is a splendid invention, but when I get big I am going to invent a new improvement to it. I am going to make the wires hollow, so you can look through and see for yourself whether we are sick or well, and other folks can look at their famerlies too.

Edith is all well now. She goes to a kidney garten. That's a new kind of school where they educate them to play their lessons, and she sings her arithmetic



MRS. HUNGERFORD'S SECOND LETTER.

and jography, and weaves mats, and ate some rock candy one day to remember the shapes of crystals.

Papa's cousin Jane has come to visit us: she calls Grandma Arnt, and she teaches me and the twins. She says they are too big for skirts, and so she's made trowsers for 'em. Grandma and I feel sorry about it, but the boys were so happy when they saw her sewing on their trowsers that they turned summersetts all the time.

When they got up the next morning, they put on their new clothes, and they smiled so all breakfast time that they could hardly drink their tea. (It isn't real tea, you know, only milk colored with warm water.) I never saw such happy boys till they tried to put some marbles in their pockets. Then they



were puffectly broken-hearted. Jimmy began to cry, and Josey could only just keep his voice steady enough to say, "There-ain't-no-bottoms—to-the-pockets an'-the — marbles-tumbles — out-of-my-legs." You know cousin Jane hadn't

put pockets in, 'cause she said they did not need them; but they thought the openings at the sides was



MRS. HUNGERFORD'S SECOND LETTER.

real pockets. I felt so sorry for them, and I've tried to draw a picture to show you how they looked. It's Josey, but you know both the twins look 'zactly alike, and you can't tell them apart. It's worse than ever in trousers.

Cousin Jane took me and the twins to spend the day at her sister's in Rye. We went in the cars, and we had a splendid dinner, plum-pudding and little tarts and oranges, and all sorts of pies, and turkey. I kept telling the boys not to eat too much, but they seemed to have a splendid appetite. After dinner, cousin Jane sent them out in the yard for exercise. I wanted to go too, but I thought I ought to stay in and talk to the grown folks ; but I sat by the window to watch the twins. They went into the yard first where the sheep were, and said, "baa-baa-baa," to them, but the sheep crowded into one corner and wouldn't answer back. So the boys came out and climbed up on to the pig-pen for a while and grunted at the pigs, and the pigs grunted back again at them as hard as they could, and one of them stood up and tried to get at their shoes. That frightened them, and they climbed down again. Then they went into



MRS. HUNGERFORD'S SECOND LETTER.

the poultry yard, and I couldn't see them any more ; but pretty soon there came a scream, and we ran out and found the geese chasing Jimmy. He cried for an hour after we took him in the house ; he said :



“Dere was a one-legged goose all asleep, and I tooked a stick to tip him ober. Den he took his oder leg out his pocket and ran after us wid his mounf

open, and all his brudders comed too, and dey all said, ‘*hiss-s-s-s-h.*’”

Here's a picture about it ; but I can't draw geese as well as I can draw cats.

Papa has bought each of the boys a new suit with real pockets and heaps of buttons, but I think they would look more polite if they didn't wear apples and balls in their pockets.

You said you wanted to hear about all of us, so I will tell about the baby. She hasn't quite got over being cross, and she has a cold all the time, because she won't keep the bed-clothes over her at night.



MRS. HUNGERFORD'S. SECOND LETTER.

There was an advertisement in the paper that somebody would sell an article for one dollar, and three cents for postage, that would keep children from kicking off the bed-clothes. So grandma sent a dollar bill to the place, and a postage stamp, and they sent her back a piece of string. Did you ever hear of such a humbug? It just meant that we could tie the baby into her crib. Now she has a new kind of night-gown with legs and feet to it. She looks very funny when she has it on, and I'll draw you her likeness going to bed.

I don't know as it is a very good thing for her, for she is so delighted with her "footy bags," as she says, that she lies on her back every night after she goes to bed, and sticks her feet straight up in the air to look at them, so of course she can't keep any bed-clothes on. "Toes in mittens," she says, only she don't say it very plain. You would laugh if you could hear her talk to them and tell her "toe toly" (she means toe story) before she goes to sleep. I'll write it down for you just as she says it, only she does it in such a funny singing way:





MRS. HUNGERFORD'S SECOND LETTER.

Iss itter pigger marka wenta,  
Iss itter pigger homer senta,  
Iss itter pigger cooky zata,  
Iss itter pigger cama arter,  
Iss itter pigger say wee, wee, wee,  
Dey taker muzzer awaya mea.

Now I will write it in plain English for you:

This little pig to market went,  
This little piggy home was sent,  
This little piggy cookies ate,  
But this little piggy came too late.  
This little pig said wee, wee, wee,  
They've taken my mother away from me.

Here is one more picture for you. It is a portrait of the baby after she is put into her crib, but it doesn't look so very much like her.



Good-by, my dearly mam-  
ma. I am your little loving  
lonesome daughter,

MAIE HUNGERFORD.

P. S. I thought I was through, but I always think of something else. I have begun to write a novel, but it's a secret: no one knows it but Edith — she calls



MRS. HUNGERFORD'S SECOND LETTER.

it a nobble. I shall have to get some grown person to have it printed, for I don't think they would do it for a little girl. I don't know whether I shall have just one book made for myself, or get a whole lot and sell them in a book-store.



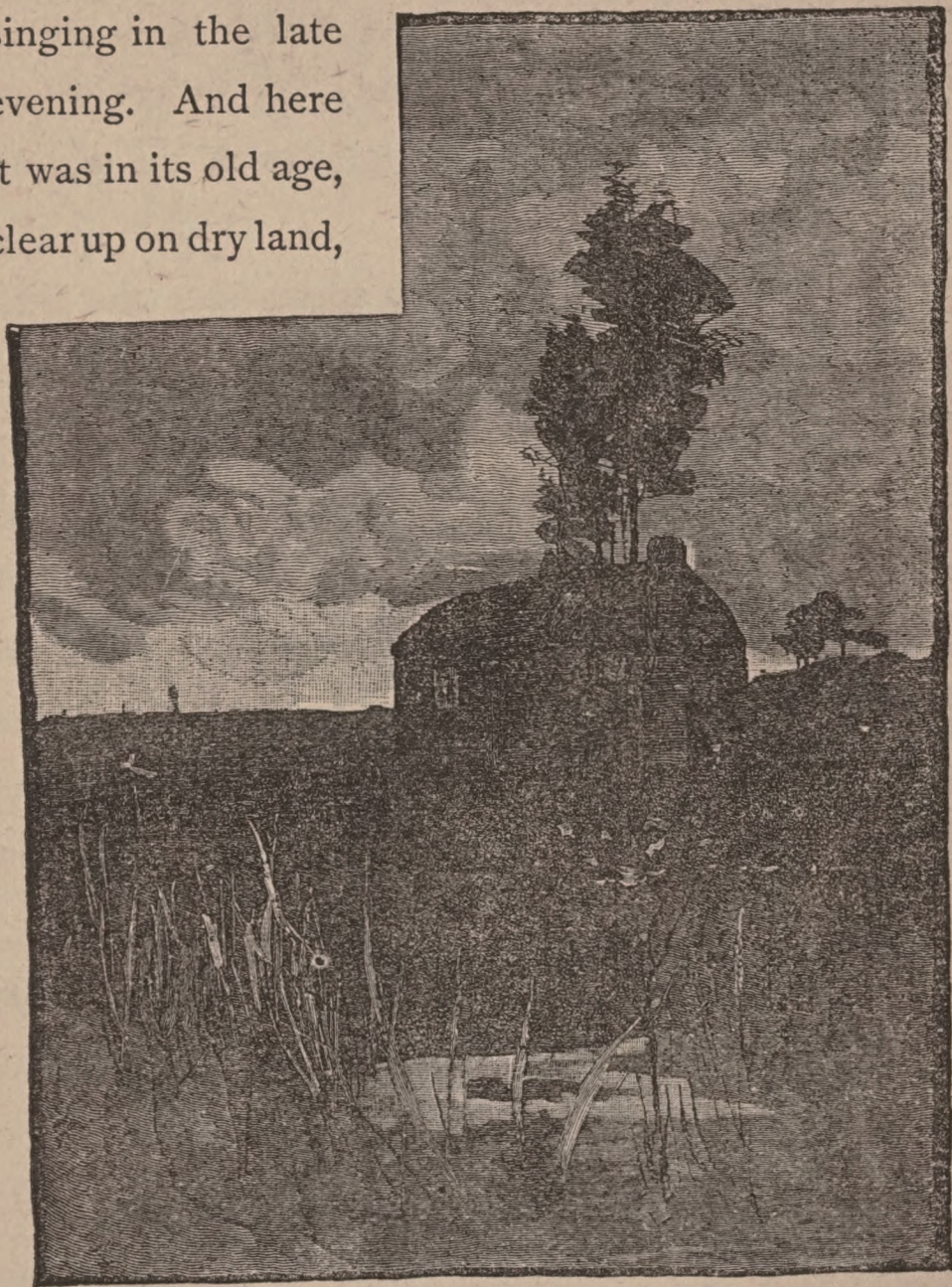
## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

MANY years ago, in a far-away village, there stood the strangest-looking house you ever saw — a one-story house, rather small, very broad on the ground, and sloping up to no breadth at all at the top. And besides sloping up toward the top, it curved toward each end. And somehow the chimney looked as if it had been built outside and then pushed down through the roof, instead of growing up from within in the orthodox way. The upper part of the house had once been green, and the lower part had once been white. If you had seen it, you would certainly have cried out, "Why, it looks just like a boat turned upside down." And in fact, that was just what it was — a real boat that had been tossed about on the waves all through its youth; had car-



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

ried out the fishermen full of hope to their work on the dim horizon, and had borne them back merrily singing in the late evening. And here it was in its old age, clear up on dry land,



TRYING TO LOOK LIKE A REAL GENUINE HOUSE.

with its chimney and windows and doors, trying to get off its sea-legs—so to speak—and look like



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

a real, genuine house. But it had not settled very far from the shore. All around it were wide sandy plains, with here and here a growth of oak and pine ; and on a windy day you could hear the beating of the waves mingled with the sighing of the pines.

One afternoon in the early springtime, the little door stood open wide. What a pleasant little room to enter ! though, to be sure, it gives you a sort of “capsized ” feeling to look up at the keel overhead, and see the ribs curving up to it from either side. A pretty, quaint, cheerful, homelike room, for all its rough table and chairs and lack of ornament.

On this particular day, then, little Naomi—lame Naomi—and her father, were having a very earnest conversation.

“Father,” cried she, “you will surely be back before to-morrow night. You know the moths might settle any night now.”

You don't know what that means, do you? Well, Naomi's father—her mother had been dead more than a year—was poor, very poor ; but by great care and hard work he had saved enough to lay out



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

a little cranberry-bog, about a mile from their house, right by the running brook. It costs a good deal to lay out a bog—to haul on the clean sand, to set the straight rows of vines. To watch their growth, too, is a matter of no small moment, for in the spring, just when the vines are in flower, there come swarms of little flies or moths, settling all over the bog, and laying their tiny eggs in the heart of every blossom; these eggs change to worms later on, and spoil the berries. There is one way to cheat the little creatures; for all the bogs are made beside running brooks, and as soon as the moths appear, the man who is watching, turns the course of the stream right into the bog, which is thus soon flooded, and the little moths are drowned. Then the brook is allowed to run on in its old channel, for the berries are saved.

Now you know what Naomi meant when she said the moths might come.

“Yes, child,” her father said, “we could ill afford that loss. I shall only be away during the day; never fear.”

Early the next morning the father plodded down the footpath toward the river, little Naomi hobbling



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

along beside him with the aid of her crutch. In a moment he was in the boat, paddling slowly, first on one side, then on the other.

“Be sure to come home early, father,” cried Naomi; and he had just time to nod and smile, when a bend in the river shut him out of sight.

All day long Naomi sat by the door-way in her little rocking-chair—one her father had made for her—sewing away and singing away just as happy as if she had been a princess. The song was one her mother had taught her :

“Away, away, where the waves are rolling,  
Where you hear the solemn bell-buoy tolling,  
Where the boat goes skimming o’er the sea  
Which shall bring him home to me, to me.

“ Away, away, where the wind is blowing,  
Where the currents sweep and tides are flowing,  
Where the boat goes skimming o’er the sea  
Which shall bring him home to me, me.”

To be sure, she was very lame — always had been ; so lame that she was obliged to sit still most of the time ; “but then,” said she, “no one has everything, and I am so much better off than most folks.”



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

At last it began to grow dark—just a little—so that Naomi could not see to sew very well, and laid her work by to watch the red clouds sailing by, and see the young leaves just rustling in the faint puffs of air. Then it became darker and darker, and a little chilly, too; so she shut the door, and stirred up the embers on the hearth, and threw on more wood, so that the little room fairly glowed with light, and all the pans on the wall flashed like diamonds. Then she drew out the table, and put on the pretty red cover and the heavy crockery, and hung the kettle on the crane. And the heart of the old boat must have rejoiced at the warmth and light, when it remembered that it would never again face the stormy sea.

“Why doesn’t father come?” thought Naomi, as the hands of the clock moved slowly round. “How late he is!” and she pressed her face against the window to try to get a glimpse of out-doors; but it was as dark as pitch outside.

“Hark!” she said suddenly; “there he comes;” and wide open she threw the door. The steps drew nearer and nearer, and in a moment two men burst into the light streaming out from the doorway.

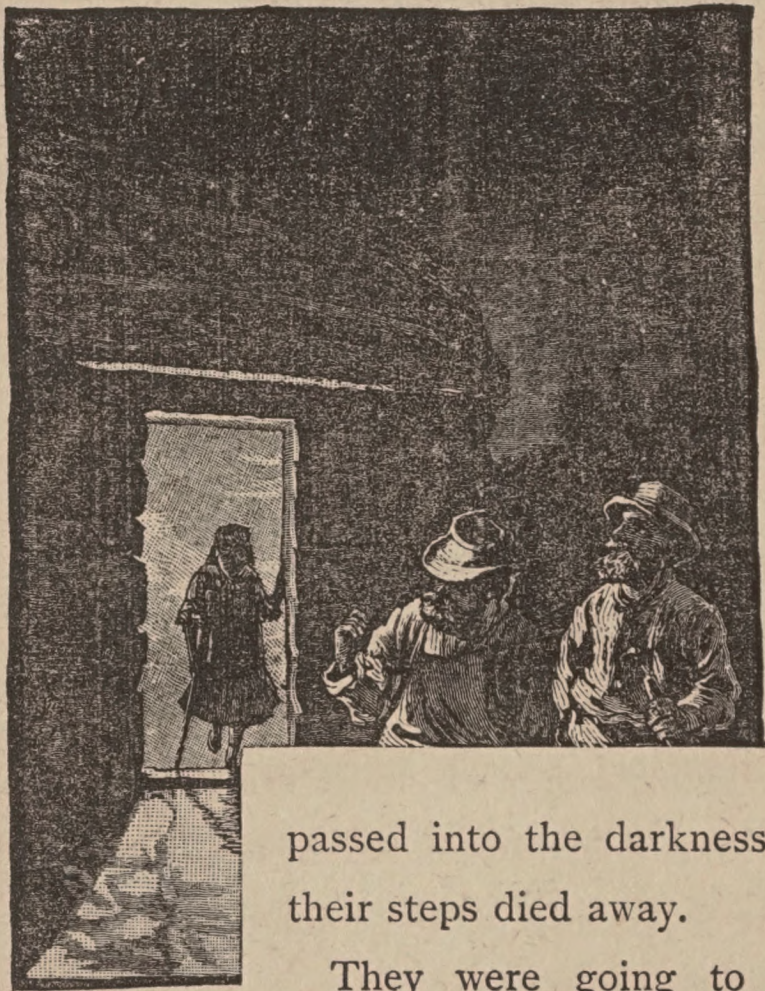


## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

She had been so much alone that she was not afraid. So she called out:

“Where are you going?”

“We’re bound for the West Bog, to let on the water.”



WHERE GOING?

“Have you seen my father?”

“No. He ought to be up to flood his bog 'fore long.”

Then they passed into the darkness again, and their steps died away.

They were going to flood their bog, then; they knew there was danger, Naomi thought. Oh, why didn't her father come? What should she do? For a moment — only a moment — she hesitated.



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

Then she hurried to the closet and lighted the lantern, put on her cloak, took her crutch, and only waiting an instant to listen once more for her father's steps, she hobbled and ran down the path as best she might. On she hurried, the crutch stumping, stumping over the ground.

Oh, how dark it was! How small and alone she felt in this great black night! Once a rabbit burst from the bushes and scuttled across her way; time and again she thought she saw men crouching right in her path; and once she almost fell to the ground when close to her ear a loud voice cried out: "*Tu whit, tu whit, tu whoo!*" But she was a brave little girl, and she kept right on. But she had never walked so fast or so far, and soon her foot began to pain her at every step; but she dreaded to stop in all that darkness, so on she went. Then all at once she came upon a little cottage with a dim light burning in a front window. She knocked.

"What is it?" said a woman's voice. "Go away, or I'll set the big dog on ye, and git out the gun, and call my husband, and have you arrested! Ye'd better leave."



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

Naomi laughed.

"I'm only a little girl," she said. "Is there a man here that could go up to the bogs?"

"Be you alone, young woman?" asked the voice; and Naomi thought she saw the curtain drawn aside a little.

"All alone."

"Sure? 'Cos, if you haven't come to rob the house, I won't take the trouble to wake up the three men and the dog that's sleepin' in the next room, and git down the gun." And the door was opened a trifle.

"Why, you poor child!" cried the woman. "Well, well, how you did frighten me! I thought some robbers had come. I'm all alone. Come in."

So Naomi went in and sat down a moment by the fire; saw the cat dozing on the hearth, and laughed to see the old woman jump every time a leaf rustled outside. At last she left her alone again, and hurried along the lonesome road. But suddenly she stops; here right before her is a deep, broad brook, and in the faint light of the lantern she sees one narrow, slippery plank to lead across. Must she go back?



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

In a moment her plan was laid. She raised her crutch and threw it clear over the brook ; and then, the lantern hanging on one finger, she knelt down on the narrow plank, and grasping it with both hands, began to crawl along. Every instant she expected to fall into the dark water which she could just see slipping slowly along below.



BRAVE LITTLE LAME NAOMI.

But at length the stream was crossed, and on she hobbled again. She is almost there now. She knows just where stands the gate across the brook, for her father has often brought her here. She sees it there in the darkness, where the brook boils and foams and rushes through. Here it is at last. While



## HOW NAOMI FLOODED THE BOG.

she unfastens the gate, she sees a fish or two dart into the light of the lantern for an instant—and then, thud, splash fell the gate, and the water rose.

And then she fell over on the cold, hard ground, and fainted away from fright and pain.

Well, she awoke in the little room in the boat, and saw her father standing looking into the dancing fire. And she felt so warm and comfortable that she did not speak for a moment; and then she said, “Did it save the berries, father?”

And how her father came and talked to her, how he praised her and blamed her, and what they did with the money they received for the cranberries, would take too long to tell. But of all the stories that Naomi tells to her grandchildren, the one they like best is that which tells how the owl hooted, and how she crossed the bridge and saved the bog.















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